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THE FALL'S AMAZING NEW ALBUM 'YOUR FUTURE, OUR CLUTTER' REVIEWED

COVER IMAGE: PAMELA LITTKY

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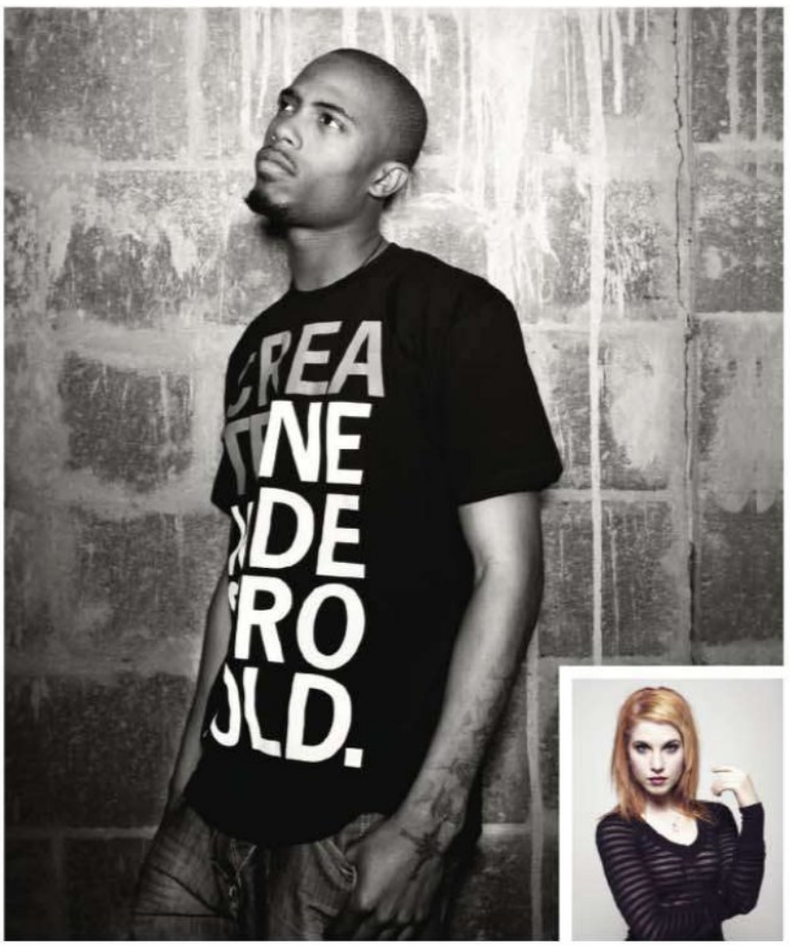
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ON REPEAT

THE SOUNDS RATTLING AROUND THE SKULLS OF THE NME STAFF THIS WEEK



TRACK OF THE WEEK

BoB FEATURING HAYLEY WILLIAMS

Airplanes

Rather than donning a do-rag and swaggering about telling anyone who'll listen that she's burnt her Fueled By Ramen back catalogue and is now listening to nothing but Public Enemy and Paris, Hayley Williams' first foray into hip-hop is a much subtler, far more credible affair. Lending her epically lunged sweet female attitude to the first of this two-parter from rap's next mahoosive thing, Bobby Ray Simmons, from the tinkling piano kick-off you'd be forgiven for thinking that you've simply chanced upon one of Paramore's recent slowies. Not so. Instead you're faced with a searing shot of hi-energy melancholy, pinned down with heavy Hot-lanta beats, Simmons' irrepressible flow and, of course, Williams' oddly emotive hook; surely this year's most heart-rending lyric about an Airbus 320. She even gives it a bit of Mariah at the end, warbling over the outro like all good hip-hop divas do. 'Airplanes (Part II)' features vocals from Eminem, but we couldn't possibly talk about that here – that deserves an *On Repeat* of its own, surely. **Leonie Cooper, writer**

Watch it on YouTube now

Hayley Williams' first foray into hip-hop is a subtle, credible affair



KELIS

Acapella

She appeared to have lost her knack of staying ahead of pop's curve – but divorcing Nas seems to have given Kelis a creative jolt: this is her most thrilling tune since 'Milkshake', a sparsely arranged – ahem – "banger" that does that 'I Feel Love' thing of making you feel weirdly hot under the collar. **Luke Lewis, Deputy Editor, *NME.COM***

Watch it on YouTube now

WOLF GANG

Back To Back

I'm getting progressively more obsessed with Max McElligott. Much moodier and more xx-y than his perky new romantic Sparksian shtick so far has suggested, this is a big ol' swoony love song with a throbbing bassline to knock your feet from under you. **Emily Mackay, Reviews Editor**

Hear it on NME Radio now

THE SHIMMER

Crash

Hailing from the Isle Of Sheppey, The Shimmer know a thing or two about cold waves. While their synthesized swagger owes a debt to the once unknown pleasures of minimal '80s machine pop, they are led with lustful lustre by David Hanks, who has a voice carved from black ice and a face built for bedroom walls. **Scott Wright, *Pinglewood* blog writer**

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MONARCHY

The Phoenix Alive

For anyone questioning the blood, sweat and tears shed in the world of synth-pop, look no further. From its title onward, the second single from London's camera-shy disco drama queens sounds like one of the battle scenes from *Clash Of The Titans* set to the beat of Kylie's 'Can't Get You Out Of My Head'. **Jaimie Hodgson, New Music Editor**

Hear it on MySpace now

MAPS & ATLASES

Solid Ground

This Chicago four-piece weld the intricate quirks of Animal Collective with a backdrop of clomping wooden guiros and woozy synths, while mastering the vocal melancholy of TV On The Radio so majestically that singer Erin Elders sounds like a Tunde Adebimpe in the making. **Ash Dosanjh, Assistant Reviews Editor**

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GOLD PANDA

You

We like glo-fi, although after a while it is a bit like having quick-drying cement poured in your ears and then having to listen to *I ❤ 1983* while suffering from concussion. Gold Panda, aka Derwin, an Essex-born remixer with an obsession with Japanese culture, serves up a glittering antidote slice of minimal J-techno. **John Doran, writer**

Hear it on Pitchfork.com now

YOUNG REBEL SET

Borders

It might not seem like it, but the derelict steel mills and ship-building warehouses of Stockton-On-Tees are the perfect backdrop to peddle Springsteen-heavy blue-collar buddy rock. Dusty, uplifting and piano-led: who needs The Boss and a hypocritical £65 arena ticket when the workers have gaslight anthems like 'Borders' on their doorstep? **Matt Warwick, writer**

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BLONDES

Moondance

It's hard to know where the hell you are with Blondes. Their strung-out instrumentals take you on a magic carpet ride from Kompakt HQ in Berlin to Chicago's house clubs via a bedsit in Bristol for some Fuck Button pushing. Fans of The Field or Merok's previous might want to prick up their ears. **Tim Chester, Assistant Editor, *NME.COM***

Free download from NME.COM/mp3blog



UNITED NATIONS OF SOUND

Third Eye (Columbus Circle)

Featuring the line "*This is some kung-fu shit*", the second song we've heard from Richard Ashcroft's new project has No ID amping production up to The Roots-like levels of swoopy string samples and guitar noodling. Dicky, meanwhile, croons over the top about souls, ie, a bit like a recent Ian Brown song, ie, it's ace. **Jamie Fullerton, News Editor**

Watch it on YouTube now

TOM OXLEY

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UPFRONT

WHAT'S HAPPENED AND WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MUSIC THIS WEEK

Edited by Jamie Fullerton



MURPHY'S DOWNLOADING LAW

*The **LCD Soundsystem** mainman gets on his knees at their secret NYC comeback gig – begging the crowd not to leak the new album*

FRONT ROW

Illegal downloading, eh? Some musicians just aren't really down with it, are they? LCD Soundsystem's James Murphy *really* isn't down with it – so much so that last Monday (April 12), during his band's secret gig at New York's Webster Hall, he got down on his knees to beg the crowd not to fire his band's new album 'This Is Happening' into the webosphere.

"If you got a copy of the record early and you feel like sharing it with the rest of the world, then please don't," he pleaded to the crowd – featuring one or two industry big-wigs who got super-special early copies of the album (out to buy on May 17). "We spent two years making this record and we want to put it out when we want to put it out. I don't care about money – after it's out, give it to whoever you want for free but, until then, keep it to yourself."

The poor songwriter/frontman went through all the emotions during the show – swinging from yearningly pleading to jokingly apologetic, as he recalled an earlier secret show in Brooklyn in between playing newies including the single 'Drunk Girls' plus 'Pow Pow' and 'I Can Change'. "If you were at the Brooklyn show, I just want to say I was really drunk that night," laughed the frontman, referring to a gig in Williamsburg on April 8. "I'm less drunk tonight, so it should be a better show."

Indeed – while the comeback New York gig wasn't exactly note-perfect, the one hour and 50-minute set was greeted with complete euphoria by most of the fans rammed inside the venue and indicated that the band are hitting the ground running – if not sprinting – before they head to the UK later this month. In the meantime, just head to *lcdsoundsystem.com*, where James has bizarrely made 'This Is Happening' available to hear in full. Er, for free.

The Setlist

- Pow Pow
- Yr City's A Sucker
- Us Vs Them
- Drunk Girls
- Losing My Edge
- All My Friends
- I Can Change
- Tribulations
- Movement
- Yeah
- Someone Great
- Daft Punk Is Playing At My House
- New York, I Love You But You're Bringing Me Down

James spies someone on the balcony with a RapidShare account

PIETER M VAN HATTEM

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SUPERGRASS SILENCE THE DRONE

Band split, keeping 'lost' album

Supergrass called it a day last week after 17 years of stellar service to chirpy rock and great sideburns. But now they've told us that they're leaving a 'lost' drone album behind as they head off to pastures new (or to run pubs in the country).

In January the band let us into the studio to preview their new "psychedelic, mad Supergrass record", according to Gaz Coombes, outlining it as a "drone" album named, fittingly, 'Release The Drones'. But after saying that the split is due to the "17-year itch", and announcing that they're going to sign off with a series of final gigs in June, the band's spokesperson told us that there were no plans to make the album available at all, ever – despite some snippets having already been released online.

So, Supergrass, we salute you for pumping on our stereo since you released debut single 'Caught By The Fuzz' in 1994 and look forward to hearing your very own 'Smile' one day, maybe...? Oh just whack it online, chaps, come *on*.

KINGS BACK ON STUDIO THRONES

Kings Of Leon drummer Nathan Followill usually tweets about booze and which expensive holiday he's on. This time, though, it was better to see him report something a bit more exciting. Nathan revealed that the chaps had put the cork in the keg and got started on the follow-up to 2008's 'Only By The Night'. He put a picture of his drumskins up along with the message, "Working nine to five", then stated the band had started sessions at the start of April, explaining they'd "put down some jams that I think you all will like" and were about to "start week number two". We'll drink to that, fellas.



THE STATS

175,000

The number of dollars less that Public Enemy are now asking fans to raise to fund their new album. It was initially $250,000 but is now $75,000 after initial take-up wasn't so good...

92

Number of songs on forthcoming boxset by The La's, 'Callin' All', out May 11. No sign of the leaked 'Kitchen Sessions', though

125

The capacity of London's Upstairs At The Garage, where The Drums (pictured) and Summer Camp are set to play an NME Radar Live gig on April 29. Tight fit...





Johnny Marr: guitarist, composer, legend and, most impressively, able to eat his own fist

JOHNNY'S NEW CINEMARR RELEASE

The Cribs man is releasing his own film soundtrack – all thanks to his old band

Johnny Marr hasn't been short of admirers during his illustrious career, and now the guitarist has been signed up to make the music for a forthcoming film because of his past glories.

And no, we don't mean The Smiths. Johnny told us that director Tony Krantz enlisted him to make the soundtrack for the forthcoming Antonio Banderas-starring film *The Big Bang* because, "he really liked The Healers' records." The Healers, in case you don't know, were the band Marr helmed from 2000-2003. They were pretty good, if slightly in the shadow of, y'know...

> ***"I've done a lot of new stuff which is atmospheric and Warp-like"***

Marr described the film as "a weird sort of half-detective, half-trippy [-style movie]," adding that he was recording the soundtrack on his own. "I've done a lot of new stuff which is kind of atmospheric and almost Warp-like," he said. "Making the guitar sound electronic. Where other people would have used orchestras I've made the same effect using guitars, which is the best thing for me because it's what I do and I get more interesting noises out of it that way." Both the film and soundtrack album are set to come out this autumn. For more news on a Healers reformation, watch this space. But don't hold your breath.

ANDY WILLSHER, JO MCCAUGHEY





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KATE NASH 'MY BEST FRIEND IS YOU'

Drinking piss, seagulls, riot grrrl and getting shafted by your mate – Kate Nash spills all on her new LP, which came out on Monday

TRACK BY TRACK

PARIS
"It's about doing things you know you shouldn't but you do anyway. I love Paris and I wrote it there – I had a nice experience with this old French man who worked in the hotel I was staying in. We couldn't understand a word each other was saying, but we talked a lot."

KISS THAT GIRL
"It's about being a bit sulky and moody and having been a bit of a dick and being jealous of everybody else. It's quite '60s girl group-y – that's what I like about those songs, they sound positive and joyous and 'wall of sound' but the lyrics are quite sad."

DON'T YOU WANT TO SHARE THE GUILT?
"I wrote it in Australia. At the beginning there's this broken relationship that needs fixing but seems unfixable and it's quite frightening."

I JUST LOVE YOU MORE
"I was listening to Skinned Teen and Heavens To Betsy and I just really liked the rawness of that. I wanted to do something a bit punkier and make it more about the build of the track rather than the lyrics – I didn't want to be restricted by having to tell a story."

DO-WAH-DOO
"It's about being ditched for the mean bully girl at school. It happened to me – in the song it's dressed up as more romantic, but in real life it was my best mate. We were like brother and sister but he ditched me and I felt so betrayed."

HIGHER PLANE
"It's about feeling low and wanting to jump off the edge, but instead you improve your life for the better."

I'VE GOT A SECRET
"It's one of my favourite songs on the record because it's quite weird – I wrote it on the drums, so it wasn't restricted by melody. It's about how ridiculous homophobia is, and the problems people have with coming out."

MANSION SONG
"It's an aggressive, in-the-face poem inspired by Billy Childish and Lydia Lunch and John Cooper Clarke... I kind of sicked it up – it all came out at once."

EARLY CHRISTMAS PRESENT
"It's about being cheated on and being the last person to know about it. It's called 'Early Christmas Present' because he slept around and ended up giving the girl something like an STD."

LATER ON
"There are a lot of synths in that and I really like Elliott [Andrews, drummer]'s drumming – it's quite sporadic and really builds up. It's about fucking up and when you've made the mistakes, instead of apologising you just go, 'That's just me and that's what I'm like, deal with it'."

PICKPOCKET
"I wrote that one ages ago. It's a weird little story about trying to escape from something before it gets too fucked. We used a space echo and there's really ambient reverb vocal stuff in it."

YOU WERE SO FAR AWAY
"It's about suicide and prostitution. I read a short story called *Piss* by this Japanese female writer [Yuzuki Muroi], it's about a prostitute. The only person she trusted was a client who didn't want to have sex with her – all he wanted to do was for her to piss in a cup and he would drink it."

I HATE SEAGULLS
"It's a nice, sweet love song and I just thought it'd be nice to end on something lovely! It's a love song so it's really pure and I didn't want to make it over-complicated. It's actually recorded on an electric guitar, but it's really stripped."

NEED TO KNOW



Title: 'My Best Friend Is You'
Producer: Bernard Butler
Recorded: London's RAK studio
Muse: Fluffy the black rabbit (pictured), who Kate brought to the studio every day

RICHARD JOHNSON

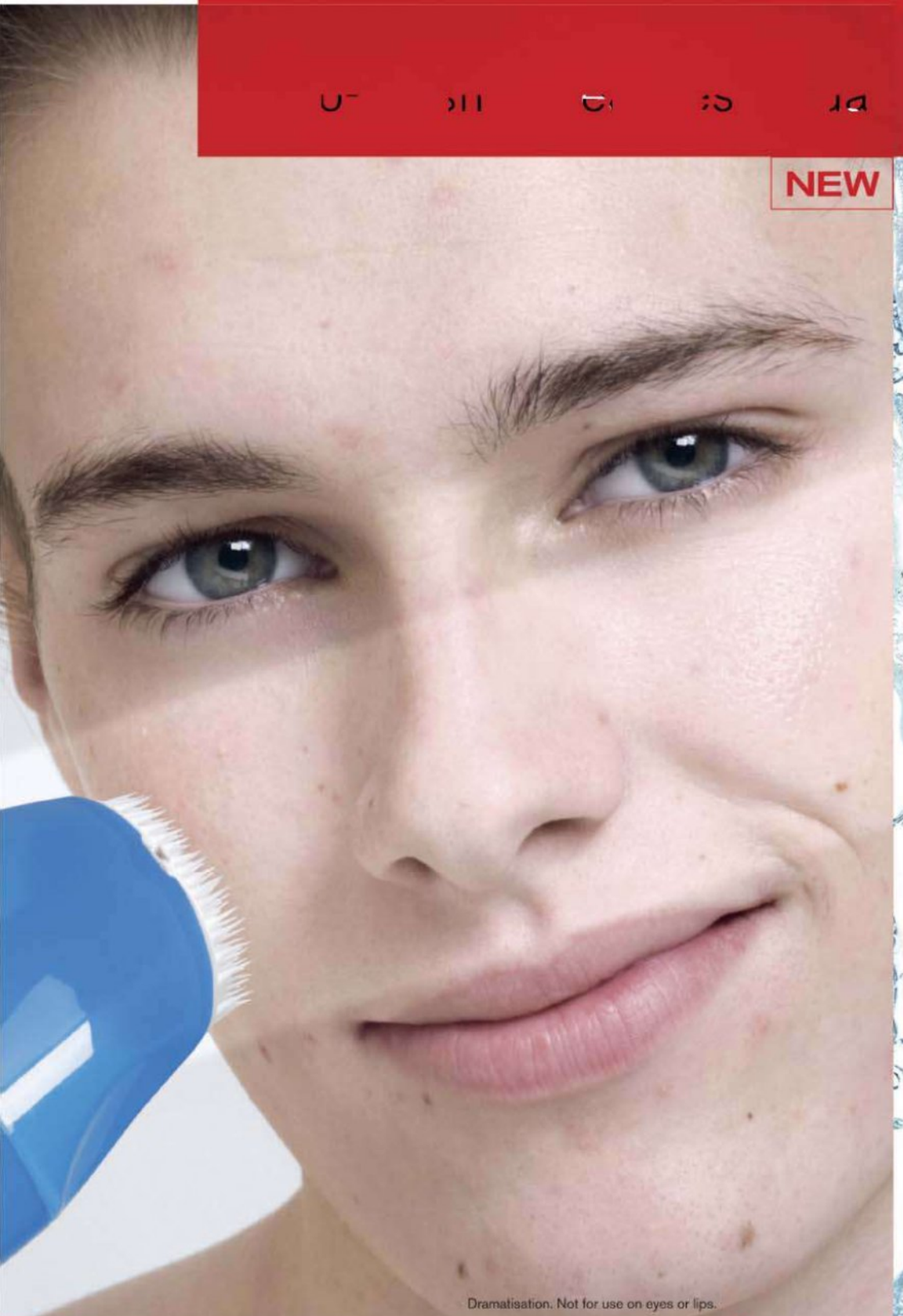
Nash has a chip on her shoulder. Oh no, hold on, that's a rabbit

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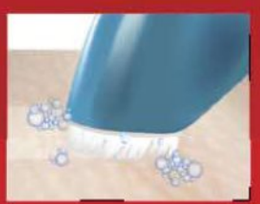
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"WE CAN STILL HAVE THIS, IT FEELS GOOD AGAIN"

With the ink still drying on a fresh record contract, The Coral are returning with a defiant new album – despite being one man down...

IN THE WORKS

"We're in the best position we've ever been in," says James Skelly defiantly. The Coral frontman, sitting in the band's Wirral practice room, is mulling over their immediate future. They've a new West Coast-influenced album called 'Butterfly House' ready for release on July 19, and a reinvigorated outlook following the news that label Deltasonic has just inked a new deal with Cooperative (thus moving away from Sony). "There'll be no, 'Have you got a hit single?' 'Can you 'feat' Chipmunk on your tune...?'" Skelly laughs, adding that the band's key aim was to make something fans could lose themselves in from start to finish.

It's also their first record without guitarist Bill Ryder-Jones, who quit in 2008. His exit forced The Coral to "shift everything around", according to drummer Ian Skelly. New song 'Walking In The Winter' was even the result of laying down the law to bandmate Lee Southall. "I was like, 'You're gonna have to take it on now as a guitarist!'" explains James. "What've you got?!' And then he played those chords..." Ian adds, "That tune was the point where I thought, 'Yeah, we can still have this, it feels good again'."

The majority of the other songs were honed on a series of *Withnail & I*-style getaways to the country that saw the band engage in walking, ghost-hunting and getting leathered. "We rented old little houses in the middle of nowhere – the bits where nobody goes in the Lake District and Wales," James laughs. "At one point Nick [Power, keyboards] was demoing from an outside jacuzzi..." How wonderfully rustic.

THE DETAILS

Title: 'Butterfly House'
Producer: John Leckie
Recorded: London's RAK Studios
Songs: 'A Thousand Years', 'More Than A Lover', 'North Parade', 'Green Is The Colour', 'Walking In The Winter'
Release date: July 19



TOM OXLEY

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Speed Dial
ELLY JACKSON

The singer reveals all about picking up the guitar for La Roux's next album – and how she's no desire for that Rihanna collaboration...



DEAN CHALKLEY, IPC IMAGES

There's been talk about a change in direction for your next album. Are you ditching electro pop?

Elly Jackson: "If I made a record like the last one again I'd be there for the dumping pile. And if I was a fan I think I'd put *myself* in that pile. We need to move on. We want to, and certainly in my head, I don't listen to any of the music I listened to while making the first record. Everything has changed."

So what's the plan?
"We're contemplating a concept album: the subject of monogamy and whether it's normal or not. I suppose it would sort of be about the myriad emotions and guilt about how it would feel to betray someone. It's a subject matter that's come into my mind over the last six months with people around me. It's from being on tour, and seeing how much of *that* goes on."

Are you drawing from any personal experiences?
"It's something I've always found fascinating. Actually... no, it isn't [to do with personal experiences]. Not at all. In the end I really haven't been betrayed by anyone."

How's the sound going to differ?
"I've gone back to playing the guitar, which I'd dropped for a few years. Recently I bought a Fender Strat – a cream one, true '80s style – and I've just been on tour and I've been getting the promoter to make sure there's a guitar in every hotel room."

Back to your folk roots?
"Not really. I've been listening to these compilations called *Star Funk*. Not funk like James Brown. It's kind of white disco funk. Also I'm obsessed with tracks like 'Harmony' by Suzy Q and 'Love Tempo' by Quando Quango. Fucking amazing tunes!"

Do you worry about matching the success of the first album?
"This industry is really, really fickle. You have to get used to it as an artist – your fans aren't there for you, like lifelong fans were in the '70s or in the '90s with Oasis. They're fans of yours until the next new female comes along."

We've heard you've been approached by some heavyweights about collaborations...
"I've had three or four offers for collaborations in America. Big, big artists. Rihanna was very interested for a time. Nelly Furtado. Ben [Langmaid, other La Roux member] already worked with Kelis for her new record, but I don't think the track was used. I've just been approached by NERD. I'm still mulling over whether I'll do it."

In For The Bill
Why her mum's TV show was axed...



"My mum [Trudie Goodwin] has been saying for years that *The Bill* is going to end. Not from any info, she just *knew*. When it stopped being about crime and being about sexy policemen's personal lives, the core audience switched off."

How did the Rihanna thing come about?
"That was weird. My A&R man said, 'Rihanna's gonna call!' That was the last I heard of it. She didn't call! It was around the time of, er, troubles in her life. To be honest, do I really want to work with Rihanna? Not really. I'm more interested in what the phonecall would be like."

So a no to Rihanna... anyone you'd say yes to?
"I just spoke to Giggs and I'm hopefully doing a track with him and Liam [Howlett] from The Prodigy. Liam's made a beat and me and Giggs are going to cover it. It's a chance for me to put my foot down about the whole urban music thing from last year [where she took flak for slagging off commercial urban acts]."

How pissed off were you about the fallout from that?
"It really pissed me off. Obviously. Because I like urban music! This is my chance to say, 'Yeah I *do* like urban music! But music that actually *is* urban'!"



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VERSUS

Peter Robinson Vs ADAM LAMBERT

The runner-up in American Idol *will never be as good as Lady Gaga. Fact*



FYI

- Ex-Darkness man Justin Hawkins has written a song on Adam's album. It sounds exactly like a Darkness song, except not as bad.
- Adam rubbing someone's face in his crotch at the American Music Awards prompted outrage, leading his fans to go, "Ooh, it's homophobic to be offended".
- Some of it was a bit homophobic but, regardless of gender, if you rub your willy on anyone's face you're not exactly going to get America's moral majority saying "well done", are you?

Hello, Adam. What does the rest of today hold for you?
"I'm getting organised for a big trip – I'm going to Japan, the UK, Germany and Australia."

Are you big Down Under?
"(*Guffawing*) I'd like to think so. There's certainly interest building..."

What's the main point of difference between yourself and an *American Idol* graduate like Kelly Clarkson?
"I definitely think I'm more specific in my taste and my style. Not quite as family friendly."

Are you saying you're not family friendly because of the sort of person you are, or because you're gay?
"I'm not saying I'm not family friendly, just that I'm not *as* family friendly. It's family friendly for a liberal, open-minded sort of family, but the album's well-behaved."

The album's pretty conservative, really.
"There's a little bit of edge there, but I wanted to make sure there was nothing offensive. It's about having a good time and feeling sexy and a lot of it's about relationships."

So when you were trying to make it accessible were you changing things you'd already done, or leaving things out?
"In where, in songs?"

Did you 'alter your art' to make it accessible, or just not create inaccessible songs to start with?
"That was one of the many things on the checklist of what made a song right for the album."

It's hard to imagine Thom Yorke crossing out songs because people might not find them accessible enough.
"I did find myself splitting the difference a bit – on one hand making something that I could put my own spin on, and keeping my integrity, but on the other hand I do want to make really commercially successful music."

As an older pop star – you've suddenly appeared in your late twenties – is yours a steep learning curve?
"You're right, I am a little bit older starting out than others..."



You're about a decade older.
"Throughout my twenties I've done performances in clubs and on stages, and I feel that the things I'm doing now are the result of my experiments. I don't take myself that seriously, particularly my music, so the cheeky, campy sort of approach will hopefully be appreciated."

This campy image seems to be quite arch and knowing and 'meta', but am I right in thinking that if someone were to say to you, 'This is the worst album ever made', you'd probably become quite serious?
"The album's pretty diverse – we tried to make it so that every song had a different colour to it. So I would urge those people to keep listening."

Is it hard continuing to do what you do knowing that you'll never be as good as Lady Gaga?
"Er... (*Laughs*) Well, I think I'm different from her. I mean I love her. But we're different."

I do agree that you're different artists, but she's still better.
"Well it's a matter of opinion."

Well it's not, it's fact.
"Right, well I'm glad that you have that opinion."

And what I'm saying here Adam is not that you are not good. Just that however good you are, Lady Gaga is better.
"Uh... Yeah! Right on."

Well thank you for your time.
"Cheers!"

THIS WEEK'S TOP 20

THE NME CHART

1	1		PLAN B 'SHE SAID'	679/Atlantic
2	2		TINIE TEMPAH 'PASS OUT'	Parlophone
3	NEW		KATE NASH 'DO-WAH-DOO'	Fiction
4	3		FLORENCE + THE MACHINE 'DOG DAYS ARE OVER'	Island
5	NEW		PAUL WELLER 'NO TEARS TO CRY/ WAKE UP THE NATION'	Island
6	4		MUMFORD & SONS 'THE CAVE'	Island
7	5		PLAN B 'STAY TOO LONG'	679/Atlantic
8	6		DARWIN DEEZ 'RADAR DETECTOR'	Lucky Number
9	12		THE XX 'CRYSTALISED'	Young Turks
10	35		MGMT 'FLASH DELIRIUM'	Columbia
11	NEW		LCD SOUNDSYSTEM 'DRUNK GIRLS'	Parlophone
12	34		RUSKO 'WOO BOOST'	Cooperative Music/V2
13	NEW		VILLAGERS 'BECOMING A JACKAL'	Domino
14	11		AUDIO BULLYS 'ONLY MAN'	Cooking Vinyl
15	9		WE ARE SCIENTISTS 'RULES DON'T STOP'	Masterswan
16	15		GORILLAZ 'STYLO'	EMI
17	8		GROOVE ARMADA 'HISTORY'	Cooking Vinyl
18	17		SLASH 'BY THE SWORD'	Roadrunner
19	22		GIGGS FT BOB 'DON'T GO THERE'	XL Recordings
20	NEW		SUMMER CAMP 'GHOST TRAIN'	Moshi Moshi

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NEW TO THE PLAYLIST
- THE DRUMS 'Forever And Ever, Amen'
- DUM DUM GIRLS 'Bhang Bhang, I'm A Burnout'
- SLEEPY SUN 'Open Eyes'
- GANGLIANS 'Candy Girl'
- WASHED OUT 'Belong'

The NME Chart is compiled on a weekly basis from the sales of physical and digital singles through traditional high street retailers, internet retailers and digital music service providers. Singles are eligible for the NME Chart if they have featured on the playlists of NME Radio or TV, or in NME Magazine.

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TALKING HEADS

MY TRIBUTE TO IAN WON'T BE A "NOSTALGIC BEERY SINGALONG"

Last week NME's ***Rick Martin*** *questioned* ***Peter Hook's*** *upcoming Ian Curtis tribute. Here Hooky defends what he says will be a fitting salute to his bandmate*



The thought behind me doing a gig in celebration of Ian Curtis' life actually started last year. For the first time in the 30 years since the end of Joy Division, Macclesfield Borough Council decided that they wanted to mark the anniversary of Ian's untimely death, the 30th anniversary no less, with an exhibition. The talks got quite advanced – but then it all fell through. It seemed really sad to me. I thought, 'I let 25 years go, I let 20 years go, 15, 10...' I've never done anything to celebrate what really was a fantastic start for a group and a milestone in my life. I mean, 'Unknown Pleasures' *was* a milestone in my life. It's given me my whole fucking life, and I'm delighted about that. So I thought, 'Fuck it, I'll fix something up'.

I don't know why this geezer Rick Martin would imagine that Ian Curtis wouldn't like nostalgia when he got to the ripe old age of 53. He didn't know Ian Curtis – he knows him less than I did. I think you should celebrate stuff like this anytime, anywhere, any place and in any way you can.

So I'm playing the album on May 18 at FAC251 with my band The Light. I'm singing some of the songs too, because obviously Ian's not there. When I sing, my son's going to take over on bass guitar. As a parent it's fucking wonderful! I've got a few people helping me out as well – Rowetta [ex-Happy Mondays singer]'s gonna do a couple of songs, as is Simon Topping who used to be in A Certain Ratio, hopefully. Funnily enough, we've also got the guy who used to stand in for Ian when he was ill in Joy Division. He's in *24 Hour Party People* in the bit about Bury Town Hall when we had the riot. He's going to do a couple of tracks, which I thought was a really nice nod.

Obviously, in an ideal world I'd love to do it with Bernard [Sumner] and Steve [Morris]. But Barney's big thing when we were in New Order was that we traded on the past too much – he actually agreed with your writer. Then again, Bad Lieutenant are playing loads of Joy Division and New Order in their sets at the moment. Why doesn't Rick pick on them? I'm celebrating Ian's life – I think that a more valid question would be to ask the other members of Joy Division why they aren't. Though in a funny way I suppose Bernard is doing his own tribute by doing that. I loved the bit in the piece about it being a 'boozy singalong'. Have you ever been to an Irish wake? You celebrate *life* by grabbing it by the balls and squeezing it. That's what we do in Manchester. And to do it in the old Factory building, surrounded by the pictures of Tony Wilson on the wall... I mean, you can call me an old melancholic fool, but I'm actually really happy to be doing it.



PAUL SLATTERY/RETNA

We're doing the gig in collaboration with the mental health charity Mind, too. If you read the statistics about how prevalent male depression is in the age group from 17 to 25, it throws a whole new light on the mixed-up attitudes that the youth have always had. It was very sobering to sit down and read those statistics of what Ian went through. I went through it too. You probably have as well. But luckily we survived. A lot of people don't. We're using the tragedy of Ian's untimely death to hopefully bring some awareness to the fact that some of us do struggle with mental illness.

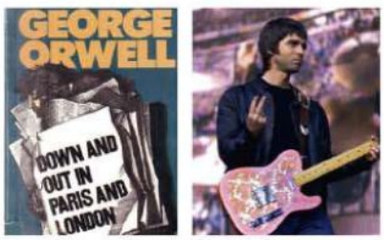
I accept that everyone's entitled to their own opinions – that's what makes life interesting, isn't it? But I'm celebrating Ian's work in my own way, which is the only thing I can do. And I'm willing to discuss the matter further with Rick any time he wants...



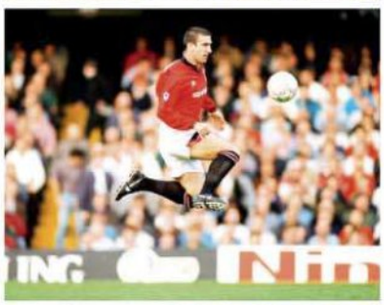
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Pieces Of Me
LIAM FRAY

The Courteeners' frontman talks mugshots, bromance and begging for beer

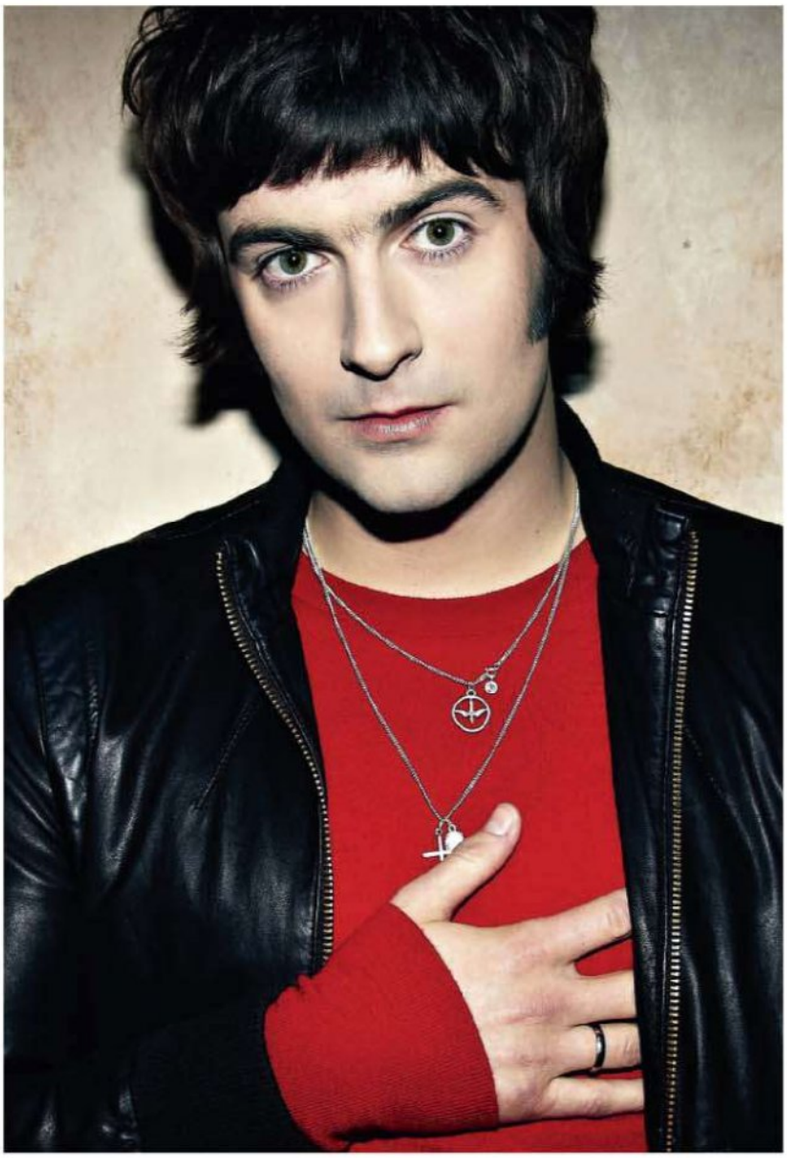




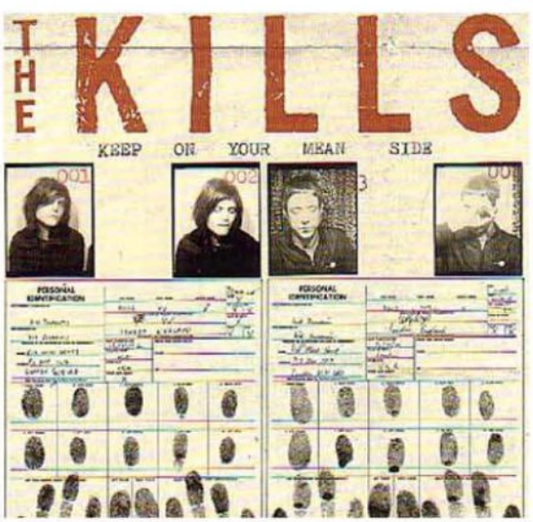








Clockwise from top left: George Orwell's *Down And Out In Paris And London*; Oasis' Noel Gallagher; Bromance experts Elbow; Football genius and spectator-kung-fu expert Eric Cantona; Stephen Fretwell; the sleeve to The Kills' 'Keep On Your Mean Side'; New York City (Lovely Day Café not pictured)



My first gig
OASIS, BOLTON REEBOK STADIUM

"It was hilarious. Me, Campbell and Conan went. The ticket said 'Doors 3.30pm' – nobody bothered to tell us they were on at 9pm! We were only about 14, turned up at 4pm and hassled people for beer. Johnny Marr + The Healers and the Happy Mondays were on, too. Not a bad first gig, that."

The book that changed me
***DOWN AND OUT IN PARIS AND LONDON* BY GEORGE ORWELL**

"He depicted homelessness as almost romantic. Homelessness has always been a massive issue in Manchester. Orwell stops you being so self-centred and opens your eyes a bit."

My favourite painting
***CAFÉ TERRACE AT NIGHT* BY VAN GOGH**

"My mother had a big version in our house, and I remember being about 10 and trying to copy it. I realised I needed to buy a guitar because I wasn't going to make it in the art world. It's a nice scene, vibrant but chilled out."

My style icon
MY GRANDAD

"Shirt and tie for every occasion. He wore Kangol way before Liam and Noel did. I'm a big fan of getting dressed up. There's nowt wrong wi' looking smart."

My favourite place
NEW YORK

"I love everything about it. Last time I was there I went to the Museum of Modern Art to see the Tim Burton exhibition. The Lovely Day Café does a great Irish breakfast."

My favourite album
'KEEP ON YOUR MEAN SIDE' BY THE KILLS

"They were the first band I properly fell in love with. I followed them round the country, went to four or five gigs. The stand-out tracks were 'Kissy Kissy' and 'Cat Claw'. 'Fried My Little Brains' is mega too."

My favourite lyric
'FRIEND OF OURS' BY ELBOW

"I especially like the line: *"Gentle shoulder charge/Love you mate"*. I'm totally in awe of the way certain people depict male emotion, especially as it's about his [Guy Garvey's] friend who passed away. It's so powerful, yet so simple. Everybody's had a drink and been like 'I love you, mate' but he's completely hit the nail on the head."

My favourite album artwork
'KEEP ON YOUR MEAN SIDE' BY THE KILLS

"It's mugshots and thumb prints at the police station. I fucking love that record. All their seven-inches were really cool too."

My idol
ERIC CANTONA

"When I was a ballboy at Man Utd I met Cantona and he's a fucking geezer. I was shaking, going, 'Oh my God, you're Cantona!'"

My alter ego
STEPHEN FRETWELL

"My manager said I should say Fretwell for my singer-songwriter vibe. I was like 'Fucking hell man, you can't say that!' Exciting that. Someone else'll say The Silver Surfer."

ANDY WHITTON, REX, GETTY

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RADAR

FUTURE STARS, BREAKING SCENES, NEW SOUNDS...

Edited by Jaimie Hodgson



GUY EPPEL

ABOUT TO BREAK

THE MIDDLE EAST

Behind the grandest new sound around, lie life's simple pleasures

"I'd say we were characteristically small-town folk," says The Middle East's bristly guitarist Rohin Jons, gazing hopefully over at his two mute bandmates, only to be met with sheepish shrugs. "Touring, or much of the music machine, isn't always the easiest thing for us to be a part of."

NME is sheltering from the heat outside a saloon near Denton, Texas, where these 'small town folks' are recording their debut long-player, far from their home, the sleepy coastal outpost of Townsville, Queensland. No joke, that's actually its name. This displacement was kick-started when the band's EP 'The Recordings Of The Middle East', featuring a little song called 'Blood', absconded to thousands of bedrooms across the globe. Trailing the unexpected success of their record, the band's seven-strong touring clique, featuring flute, banjo and xylophone, and fronted by the introverted Jordin Ireland, have been justifying their hype as the next rootsy combo to shoot skyward.

Touted by Marcus Mumford as the most inspiring new band around, how is the group's reluctant centrepiece enjoying folk being at its most en vogue since the '60s? "I'm not sure anything interests me less than being fashionable," Ireland whispers to his shoes, shooting a sideways glance to flautist Bree Tranter. "Mumford are a great band, but we sound nothing like them. So being lumped in together feels bizarre."

So, who would you 'lump' The Middle East in with then? Jordin recalls the feeling of elation when he first heard Sufjan Stevens. Certainly, that swell and rush of expansive prettiness – those dive bombs from total serenity into absolute jubilation – heard on their calling card 'Blood' could nestle up to anything on Stevens' iconic 'Illinois'.

Just to clarify though, guys, how does one go about defining 'small-town folk'? "I think it's placing more value in the smaller, simpler interactions with a tight group of friends and family, rather than a broader picture of a city's regime," offers Rohin. "People often tell me our music makes them think of landscapes," adds Jordin. "But the only ups and downs I fixate on are those of people's lives around me." ***Jaimie Hodgson***

Need To Know

- The Middle East are the only Townsville band to have played outside Australia
- The Middle East have never been to the Middle East
- The Middle East will be opening for Mumford & Sons on their full US tour

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HTRK, with Sean Stewart (centre)

RADAR NEWS

HTRK'S SEAN STEWART RIP

February 6, 1981 – March 18, 2010

Tributes have been pouring in to *NME* from readers and bands alike paying their respects to Sean Stewart, the bass player and founding member of HTRK, who died at home in London on March 18, aged 29. Rumours of Stewart's death spread onto the internet via an array of blogs and forums two weeks ago, and were eventually confirmed on March 21 via the band's MySpace page. While it has been widely speculated that Stewart's death was suicide, at the time of press this remained unconfirmed.

Formed in Melbourne in 2003 by Stewart, guitarist Nigel Yang and singer Jonnine Standish and originally named Hate Rock Trio, HTRK later relocated first to Berlin, then London. The band gained notoriety for their brooding, sleaze-filled post-punk sound, guided by Stewart's low-slung basslines and were influenced by everyone from Suicide to The Birthday Party. The latter's late guitarist Roland S Howard produced their debut album 'Marry Me Tonight', released last year. The album received 8/10 in *NME*, with reviewer Emily Mackay branding it "a Suicide-black K-hole soundtrack of a record, but by fuck it's sexy".

Yang and Standish, who have returned to Melbourne to mourn, have announced to *NME* that they plan to continue HTRK, issuing this statement about their bandmate's death: "We are utterly heartbroken. Sean's basslines and ideas set the scene for every HTRK song. He explored pleasure and pain with an intensity so rare. He was as charming as he was strange and beautiful. We truly loved him – he will be so dearly missed."

Numerous bands have championed HTRK. The Horrors have arguably been the most vocal, with Faris Badwan inviting them on tour on numerous occasions. He commented, "Obviously in situations like this it's important not to think of things solely in musical terms, but I knew Sean as a great bassist in a great band and it's a horrible thing to have happened." Nick Zinner of Yeah Yeah Yeahs also contacted *NME* with this message: "YYYs asked HTRK to support us last year and I would watch Sean play every night. He was the anchor to their swirling sound, his basslines were tough and aggressive, while also demonstrating fragility and beauty. He was a kind and gentle soul – funny, aloof and charming, and I am incredibly saddened to see him go."

Band Crush



Pink Eyes from Fucked Up's favourite new band

"Gape Attack are a real dark, minimal synth band from Seattle. I know next to nothing about them – there's no information on their seven-inch. My friend who works at a record store took me aside and said, 'I think this is up your alley' and he was right. It's amazing."

Radar Glossary

This week's impenetrable muso slang decoded

WOBBLE

A derivative term employed by dubstep 'purists' referring to the bouncy commercial sound popularised by the likes of Rusko, Capsa and Chase And Status. The name is derived from the sound's obsession with the 'wobble' sub-bass sound effect.

The Buzz

The rundown of artists, scenes, labels and tracks breaking forth from the underground this week



1 NICKI MINAJ

With Lil Kim's legacy being undermined one episode of *Dancing With The Stars* at a time, her uzi-porno rhyming throne now looks vacant. Nicki Minaj is trying it out for size. The New York rapper has been soaring up the rap barometer of late. After numerous collaborations with Lil Wayne, she has inked a deal with Young Money Entertainment, and has her debut single 'Massive Attack' readied for this summer. The video is directed by the legendary Hype Williams and features Nicki flying through space in a neon pink Lamborghini. What more do you need to know?



2 TEAM GHOST

These Parisians, featuring ex-M83 member Nicolas Fromageau, combine nu-gaze walls of din with the surly dungeon synths of their hometown's buzztastic cold wave sound. Crystal Castles have recruited them as support for their full European tour, and *Radar*'s got them opening at one of its Great Escape parties in Brighton on May 15.



3 CASSETTES

No-one under 65 owns the equipment to play them, but cassettes are becoming the twee-tool *du jour* with some labels solely releasing on the obsolete format. Notably the Mirror Universe Tapes imprint, with singles for Active Child and Washed Out, and Leftist Nautical Antiques, whose roster includes Weed Diamond and Cough Cool.



4 TITLE FIGHT

Fresh off the Trash Talk tour, Features Ed James McMahon wouldn't shut up about this Pennsylvania pop-punk four-piece who, he said, didn't leave the band's tour van stereo. If you bitch about how Fall Out Boy and MCR have sullied the intense but melodic anthemia of emo pioneers like Dag Nasty, then take solace here.



5 AUSTIN DIRGE

Deep in the heart of the Lonestar state lies an oasis of leftfield creativity. It seems the bohemian idyll is playing host to an ever-expanding collective of amazing no-fi post-rock discordance. For anyone into this brand of Texan DIY indie, start with local hedonists Pure Ecstasy, followed by a blast of the awesome SURVIVE or Sleep Over.

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SCENE REPORT

BASS QUAKES AND RIB-SHAKES

Dubstep's first lady **Mary Anne Hobbs** *on the latest evolutions*



I've just come back from a really crazy mission in America. I hit Miami for the Winter Music Conference, then popped over to Las Vegas, where there's an amazing emerging scene for British-based bass music. I ended up bounding to LA, a place I love in terms of it being a genuine City Of Dreams. There are these incredible opportunities to really push art forward there, and you find a lot of people mixing it up, working in film as well as music, or visual art as well as music.

There are a couple of mixes I picked up in LA that I think are very special. **Asura**, who's done the first, is about to release his debut album on a label called Non Project and his work is absolutely exquisite. He's involved with the low-end electronic scene, but also the visual art scene in Los Angeles. Likewise, I had a mix and an accompanying film by an artist called **Dr Strangeloop**. The film's called *2010* and it's about a robot – an AI deity who's imprisoned inside his own ego. It's a mind-blowing piece of work by this kid, who I really, really rate.

Deep Technology, from St Petersburg, Russia, sent me a tune called 'Afric', which is on the Local Action record label. It's hard to describe what it actually is, but I suppose it's sort of beyond dubstep. Then there's another brilliant kid called **Young Montana** that I've just discovered. He's from Coventry, he's 19 years old and I found him during one of my many epic adventures trawling through SoundCloud in the search for new music. He's probably my favourite unsigned artist right now in 2010. Then there's this wicked track by a kid called **Kavsrave** that I've been constantly playing on my show. It's called 'PClart' and I think it's a potential Number One record. If they could just get a Justin Timberlake vocal on it or something...

NEXT WEEK'S COLUMNIST: Milo Cordell (Merok/The Big Pink)

Ms Hobbs' Top 5

1
DR STRANGELOOP
'2010'
2
DEEP TECHNOLOGY
'Afric'
3
ASURA
'MAH mix'
4
YOUNG MONTANA
'MAH mix'
5
KAVSRAVE
'PClart'

5 To See

This week's unmissable new music shows

PENGUIN PRISON/ NOTTE
Hoxton Bar And Kitchen, London April 21l

A GRAVE WITH NO NAME
The Well, Leeds, April 22

YOUR TWENTIES
(pictured below)
Plug N Play, Reading, April 23

DELOREAN
O2 Academy 2, Sheffield, April 23

THESE MONSTERS/ KONG
93 Feet East, London, April 24





Young Montana: so big he's taller than buildings

ADELE M REED, JOHN LEWIS, RICHARD JOHNSON



Front row security is getting prettier

HUNX AND HIS PUNX

CAPTAIN'S REST, GLASGOW MONDAY, APRIL 12

CAUGHT LIVE

Hunx – aka Seth Bogart – is renowned for his triumphantly gay selection of viral videos, and owning his own hair salon. His Punx are a disparate bunch of female delinquents whose grasp on time and tune are as stable as a block of Jenga made of KY Jelly. Together they make a sleazy doo-wop'n'roll racket that sounds like strawberry bubblegum being inflated with bodily fluids and popped with a punch to the face. What's not to love?

OK, we'll level with you. Hunx And His Punx are a band who will inevitably polarise opinion. That's to be expected from a man sporting spandex leggings and a pencil moustache, singing lines like "*The music you like will get my ears buzzing/I think your parents must've been cousins*" in a voice reminiscent of Donald Duck with a freshly slit throat. Hunx's heritage is such that he's an ex-member of noise punk legends Gravy Train!!! and resident porn star in San Fran's slacker-rock scene, featuring Girls. He has a coitus fixation, ill-advised facial hair, penchant for nakedness and utter lack of shame. Furthermore his band may draw unfavourable (and musically unfounded) comparisons with Har Mar Superstar. In short, the odds are stacked overwhelmingly against them.

However once you've figured out that what you're watching isn't some hipster art-prank gone awry, these five Californian misfits may well grow on you like a pumped-up pectoral. For one thing, the songs – from the smutty spoken-word melodrama of 'Lover's Lane' to 'U Don't Like Rock'N'Roll's" Ramones-y cut and thrust – are too good to be mere pastiches; Bogart obviously has a real affection for the '60s girl groups and garage rockers he's referencing. And for another... well, it's just so much fucking fun.

Whether he's burping into the microphone or making come-hither motions towards male audience members during 'Good Kisser', Bogart is the sort of flagrant exhibitionist who would be worth watching even if his music was total shit. That it's instead a celebration of all that is trashy, tacky and wonderful about rock'n'roll – is your cue to abandon all apprehension and just go along for the ride, which thankfully stops just short of Bogart stripping down to his pants: "There's yellow all over my underwear," he confesses. Classy.

And if Hunx can't sway your favour, try the Punx on for size; they can't sing, they can barely play, the guitarist looks like Johnny Thunders, and the bassist is the Cali-punk reincarnation of Divine. If that's not the coolest backing band in the known universe, we don't know what more can be done for you. ***Barry Nicolson***



The audience, they're behind you!

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Coming out fighting: Courtney Love, Chateau Marmont, Los Angeles, April 10, 2010

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"COURTNEY LOVE IS DEAD"

PHOTOGRAPHS: Pamela Littky

Well, according to the woman herself she is... And that's not the only revelation the Hole frontwoman has, as she invites ***Alex Miller*** *into her LA pad for a frank conversation that takes in why her daughter is 'divorcing' her, why she's sick of talking about Kurt and why she considered suicide only last week. You join us as the wine, and tears, are in full flow...*

Nail the facts first: Courtney Love has reformed Hole. She's also been in the news because her daughter Frances Bean allegedly tried to 'divorce' her. Hole's comeback single 'Skinny Little Bitch' is riding high on iTunes. Courtney's moved out of LA and to New York. And she's sober – booze aside – but booze was never her problem, was it? You've got to nail the facts with Courtney, because the moment you push open the $10,000-a-night door to her room at the Chateau Marmont in LA (she's back here for promo), things get baffling. One moment you're drinking wine, swapping stories about Billy Corgan's dick, and the next the two of you are sitting in Pablo Escobar's daughter's bath, listening to a drunk idiot Valley girl nailing *her* facts.

Drunk Idiot Valley Girl: "OK, Courtney darling. I don't want to be rude, but that, um, 'Teen Spirit'..."

Courtney (remarkably patiently): "'Smells Like Teen Spirit'."

DIVG: "Yah. You were married to that guy, right?"

Courtney: "Yes, his name was Kurt Cobain, he killed himself."

We can't imagine Courtney has to explain that very often...

So, the photographer and I have shown up at Courtney's pad with a stack of old *NME*s under our arm. We planned to review Courtney's life through the 20 years she's spent in this magazine's pages, building up to today, at the brink of the release of 'Nobody's Daughter', Hole's first album in 12 years. Courtney wasn't blown away by that idea. "You guys always have a mandate and I always give you something better," she says, and after a 20-year relationship, she probably knows. Her friend, the writer Neil Strauss, is coming round soon, so we'd better record something now. Courtney, you're looking very happy...

"I've given up Adderall [a stimulant used to treat ADHD]," she smiles, taking my lighter. "Last time I saw you I was cutting down, now I've quit. Now I've got to quit the smokes."

Last time we saw each other was in her London flat. I'd been following her with a film crew making a collaborative documentary between VBS.TV and *NME* about the reformation of Hole. It's nearly done, I tell her, it's really good, especially the bits in the hot tub in Milan and her fighting with Lily Allen at the NME Awards. It's only been a month or so since we quit filming, but Courtney looks totally different. I let her know.

"I've ditched the kook since then. I've got rid of bags and bags of it." Three weeks ago she'd have been clasped inside Victoriana tutus and hidden behind thick face paint and beads, like a Toulouse Lautrec hostess. That look was her "kook". Today she's elegant in a silk slip, with short hair teased upwards like a '40s starlet. And it suits her. So, no Adderall, no kook, and she seems happier for it. Courtney reaches for a piece of paper with two lists scribbled in her hand.

"I had to see the psychiatrist about Frances yesterday and I wrote down all these things that were concerning me about her: her education, diet, exercise, spirituality, er, this thing [she won't let me read that one], finances, work ethic, this thing [won't let me read that one either], therapy, the grandmother, negative influences, coping skills, what school she needs to go to, and physical development. And then I wrote the things down that she worries about, about me: the obsession with my missing money, Adderall, which is not a problem any more, hoarding clothes – I've ditched the kook – not being financially responsible, she believes I want her to act – I don't – I wish she was in my band, I feel that she's being alienated."

So, where is Frances?

"She lives in LA, off a trust fund which is not as big as it should be. But I won't start talking about money. So, what I've decided is..." BTW: this is how Courtney talks – jumping from one subject to another without a paragraph break as her attention flies in odd directions. Interviewing her is an indirect process.

"So what I've decided is that I need a divorce. As of three weeks ago, it's been 17 years since Kurt died. It's unconventional I know. But, I have my 'K' on my stomach and I have the paintings that I want. I had an epiphany – things must go: obsessing about the money, the ancillary object of Kurt Cobain, the Adderall – I won't take that stuff again, Frances doesn't like it, so I've stopped. You want to hear my Jessica Simpson story?"

The Jessica Simpson story goes on a long time, but the punch line is that the big-titted wonder, who's currently, and weirdly, dating Courtney's former chap Billy Corgan, has never once smoked. *But* chews Nicorette gum. Which is actually pretty funny.

"I'm pretty sure they haven't fucked." It seems likely to me that they have, but Courtney knows them, so give her the benefit of the doubt. "I once said in your magazine that Billy was great in bed. But he's also mean in bed, he can be a sexual withholder. But he is great, he's got technique; I'm sure Corgan's sexual ego is so huge he doesn't mind me mentioning it. Actually, I had the one good threesome ever with him and a stylist in '97, even though Billy naked in '97 isn't anyone's idea of a great time."

Oh, we're talking about threesomes because last night Courtney tried to go gay, but didn't succeed. She's never really succeeded on that and has only ever had the "full one-on-one" with a sexually aggressive supermodel ("gorgeous, successful, a national treasure of yours. If you're gonna have the one-on-one, have it

"I'm ultimately a widow and a single mother, who's not even getting to be a mother right now. I am so alone"



ADDITIONAL PHOTO: REX

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with her"). My photocopied *NME*s seem a little twee in the face of lesbian supermodel orgies.

The conversation twists through fashion, IQ tests, the book Courtney's mother got her name from (*Chocolates For Breakfast*), the TVs Courtney got each of her pharmacists for Christmas ("It's hard for me to even get birth control – these two guys are good to me"), her new Birkin bag, which is apparently a MASSIVE deal but is totally over my head, and that, according to the *New York Times*, there's a Nirvana song played on the radio 50,000 times a day. She nips into the kitchen to get a pile of photographs from a year ago, at the kook height, taken by her buddy, Oscar-winning director Bennett Miller. "I saw these photos," Courtney says, "and I thought – 'That's a mentally ill person.'" We flick through the images. "I don't think I'm bipolar, my doctor says I'm bipolar-*ish*." She flashes a look, which suggests that she agrees. She changes the conversation: "When I had my dark night of the soul and I abandoned the kook, Twitter saved me. Jon Pareles [*New York Times* writer] tweeted about me, 'Incorrigible, swagger, a star'."

The conversation roams on. Her performance at SXSW: "I had a breakdown, but we got good reviews." Why she moved to Dublin when she was young: "Because I heard 'I Will Follow' and I followed." Julian Cope: "I can't work out why he hates me." Not being able to drive: "Me and Kurt had a couple of lessons so high, seriously we could have killed people." Stripping: "Chris Rock's got a joke that as a father your one duty is to keep your daughter off the pole; no-one kept me off the pole." Riot grrrl: "What fucked off those chicks was that I was always crazy ambitious, hungry like the wolf." Her Buddhism: "Nothing's sexier than a woman with a spiritual life."

At this point I'm not entirely sure the interview has officially started, but if it has, I'm a marginal figure in it. What's interesting is that Courtney's verbosity doesn't seem like a defence mechanism, as she's incredibly open, taking the conversation in directions she knows a journalist would like to go: sex, Kurt, drugs and Frances. These aren't fun topics for her. "My daughter went and got a divorce," she says miserably, "because of my nature of being controlling or whatever it is. And I need to show her..." tears congregate in Courtney's eyes, "I need to show... She wrote me a beautiful letter, saying I need you to take this anger and use it to love yourself." Is that a possibility? "Yes," she's smiling a little, "that's all I do, I sit and chant to love myself. And the line that goes through my head when I do it is – *'I love myself better than you/ I know it's wrong so what should I do?/ I'm on a plain*'." She pauses, thinks of Kurt. "God, I'm so sick of my name and his name – I am not his spokesperson on Earth! I don't know what he'd be like now, he could be into society girls, he could be into fat girls, he could be homosexual. We don't know, he died at 27.

"My guitarist Micko said once, 'He was so cool,' and I almost killed him. He wasn't cool because he fucking abandoned us. What he did to the family isn't cool. I think that a lot of people idealise suicide though. I understand it. I had an episode two weeks ago when I was tempted to jump out of a window."

Are you serious? Why?

"I'm not telling you why. The reason behind it is self-loathing. You know: wouldn't it be better if I wasn't here?"

How can it cross your mind when you're so angry at Kurt?

"Because I've always been pretty self-destructive. I need protection from myself. I'm ultimately a widow and a single mother, who's not even getting to be a mother right now. I am so alone, it's freaky."

Courtney's friend calls and I go to get a beer; the stylists, make-up people, assistants and photographers have left. She joins me in the kitchen, I open the rosé, pour her a glass and she lambasts me for putting my bottle on her Buddhist altar. We chain smoke and chat. I want to know about her ambitions for Hole.

"I want Wembley, three nights, by Christmas."

Do you want to be the biggest band in the world?

"I want to be the best band in the world, and I mean that, it's not just some bullshit. Right now that's The White Stripes, by the way".

How close are you to getting there?

"What I've always done amazingly is perform. I go to a place in performance which is like a crucifixion. It's so insanely hard, and I'm going to end up some Blanche DuBois fucking nutjob from giving too much to audiences who don't know what they're getting. I'm giving them 120 per cent, but I don't know what I want from them. Merch? Appreciation? They're giving me that, but it's almost not enough."

Is it true in life as well?

Courtney sings: "And I still haven't found what I'm looking for. I think that's the only answer, so fuck you very much, Alex."

Maybe a crowd can't give you what you want, because it's your husband you need?

She pauses for an age.

"That's possible. But it's been 17 years, we live in a culture that demands that you hurry up and I spent 10 of those years completely in denial; just blistering on promiscuity and drugs. It's not that I miss him, it's that I miss having a family. I don't even really have a daughter."

You do get the feeling that her new approach to admitting these things, and trying to deal with them is because she knows what an important time in her life and career it is. She has time to beat her demons, and win back her daughter, but surely it's now or never if she ever wants to play Wembley, and rediscover the musical glory.

We have some more wine and a lot more fags,

COURTNEY 4 NME

A brief look at Ms Love's life through our front covers



17 April 1993
Hex object: why does everybody hate Courtney Love?
Courtney's first *NME* cover came at a time when she was leaving the riot grrrl scene behind, and discovering hostility and resentment. Courtney had married Kurt Cobain, the biggest rock star in the world, and Hole had signed to a major label. Accusations of gold-digging and selling-out were being slung at her from all sides. She said in the piece, "People say Kurt's destroyed punk rock... Just because I signed to a major label doesn't make me into Madonna or Wendy James, y'know?"



ADDITIONAL PHOTOS: ALLSTAR, FILMMAGIC

12 March 1994
Kurt Cobain in drug coma – Courtney to the rescue
Kurt had overdosed in Italy on March 4, and fallen into a coma for 12 hours. Courtney was reported to have woken up next to his unconscious form and raised the alarm, saving his life. He'd taken lots of Rohypnol and champagne, but upon waking from his coma was expected to make a full recovery. He sadly had other ideas.



23 April 1994
Courtney Love – shattered in Seattle
In the aftermath of Kurt's suicide, the paper reported she was virtually under house arrest due to media clamour around her. She broke cover to speak out against heroin's availability in Seattle – "it's like apples in an orchard, it's falling off trees" – and clearly desperately grieving, blamed herself for her husband's demise: "I listened to too many people, I'm only going to listen to my gut for the rest of my life. It's my fault."



15 February 2003
Duck off! 24 hours with Courtney Love
Yes, Courtney was dressed as Donald Duck for this cover. Um, we're still not sure why. In London to perform a duet with Elton John at a charity gig at the Old Vic, in her down time she kidnapped one of our writers for two days, during which she expressed outrage about some naked pictures of her that had appeared in a magazine, and er, also dressed like Donald Duck.



7 February 2004
Courtney Love – back with a vengeance!
Around the release of her solo album 'America's Sweetheart', the singer spoke to us shortly after having overdosed and been arrested twice within a week. From the States a hyperactive Courtney yelled down the phone, "You know what I found out? The *New York Times* did my obituary about eight weeks ago. Isn't that great? YOU MOTHERFUCKING ASSHOLES! YE OF LITTLE FAITH!"

"I had the one good threesome ever with Billy Corgan and a stylist in '97"



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drifting through topics like I don't have a deadline. At one point she grabs my hand: "Here's the thing you need to know, Courtney Love is dead. We've put her away, we've all decided we don't like her any more. We love her when she goes onstage, but I don't need her in the rest of my life."

So who am I talking to now? "Courtney Michelle. The name Courtney Love is a way to oppress me." But you're responsible for that name. "Absolutely, I did it myself, I did it myself. No-one's saying that I didn't do it to myself, but, and there is a but, I got hatcheted. I got help fucking things up baby, because I'm an alpha female and there are not a lot of us."

Thinking of the moral witch-hunts the media has led against her, I ask: Do you think your life would be easier if you had played the grieving widow?

"Wow. No, I never have. I swear to you. Fuck, what kind of bastard gives me a fucking epiphany while I'm two glasses of wine in? I didn't know I had that option, no-one told me that grieving widow was an option. I never thought of it, until now in 2010. And, I guess, I did what I did for my id."

We talk about botany, Emily Dickinson and PJ Harvey, and the doorbell rings. The writer and his date join us. She's a TV actress who's just finished a pilot for Fox TV (it's the Mexican *Sopranos*, apparently) and he's just started a publishing company. He produces the first release, an obscene groupie memoir. Someone (me) puts on Yuck and Courtney reads a passage aloud. A bellboy brings more wine, shuddering a little as Courtney tips him while reading a paragraph about blow-jobs and abortion blood. Someone mentions the rumour that R-Patz is playing Kurt in the film Courtney's producing, *Heavier Than Heaven*. Courtney cracks up: "He's not."



She's all about making a splash, our Courtney...

"I'm so sick of my name and Kurt's name – I am not his spokesperson on Earth"

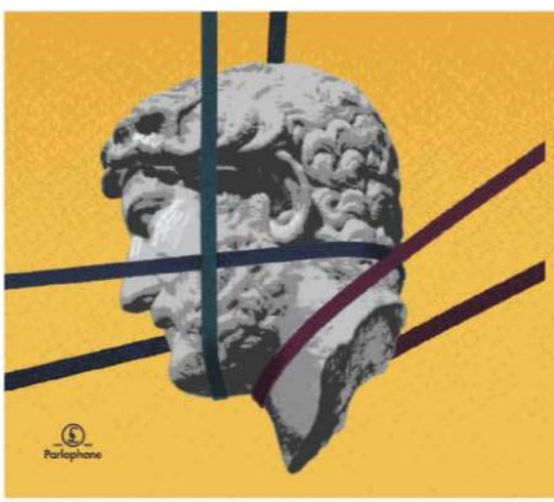


An hour later and we go downstairs to the courtyard and sit on a table next to Jessica Alba's and across from Lindsay Lohan's. Courtney tells us all about Hugo Chavez, the Venezuelan President, enemy of the US and old romantic. "We met at Oliver [Stone]'s screening. We kissed and now he sends me flowers; he doesn't send roses, he sends gardenias," she says, enjoying that last word.

As the night goes on, me and Courtney end up talking to a Drunk Idiot Valley Girl and her beautiful Colombian friend Marie. We say goodbye to Neil and the rest of us go upstairs to Courtney's room to listen to The Rolling Stones. Eventually we're sprinting across a road, two paparazzi behind us. The Colombian girl loads us into a car and we drive to a mansion in the hills.

By the time I'm passed a glass of champagne I've ascertained that Marie, which may or may not be her real name, is, a) the daughter of Pablo Escobar, the biggest drug dealer in history, and b) not sexually attracted to me. More douches arrive, people sit in the bath, someone's never heard of Kurt Cobain, Courtney calls me a beta male after Joe Sixpack Jock gets his chest out – it's all very stupid. Given the slightest chance these Beverly Hills jerks kiss Courtney's ass, but fuck knows what they say once we leave. I've left my iPod at Courtney's, so we play dodge the paps and get upstairs. We smoke fags, I leave her at five in the morning ordering eggs benedict, and walk back to my much shittier hotel.

The next morning I go back round to get my iPod (I forgot it again). Apparently the Drunk Idiot Valley Girl was waiting downstairs this morning, trying to hang with Courtney. "Last night was not fun, you know?" says Courtney. "That's not what my life is like normally. Those people *are* LA and that's why I'm leaving." We sit and talk about the new album. She's excited, she thinks it's great, she's not worried about sales, but she wants larger crowds to play to. She wants Hole to be the best band in the world and she thinks she can do it. It occurs to me how she'd want me to finish this article. OK Courtney, this is for all the fags I ponced: Courtney Love: incorrigible, swagger, a star.



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Once in a red, white & blue moon, a band comes along that reminds the world that indie rock is the USA's greatest ever export...



Band Of Horses (l-r): Creighton Barrett, Ryan Monroe, Ben Bridwell, Bill Reynolds, Tyler Ramsey

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...These bands, such as The Flaming Lips and My Morning Jacket, usually turn out to be special. Melodic, heart-on-sleeve types, entrenched in a classic American sound yet updated with an alternative twist. ***Band Of Horses*** *are set to become one of them.*

The Seattle band are poised to return with their third album, 'Infinite Arms', which is bolder, more consistently strong, just plain catchier than its predecessors. Listening to it, you can't help feeling like this is Band Of Horses' time. In fact, you might view 'Infinite Arms' as their very own 'The Soft Bulletin'. It certainly looks set to be one of 2010's landmark records. From the mental sketches conjured up – mocking ravens, drinks served during 'yellow dawns', girls called things like Annabelle – down to the soft-focus twang, everything about it has a 'feel' that suggests Band Of Horses embody the spirit of alternative America better than any other band right now.

Frontman Ben Bridwell mulls this over: "It's not our grand plan to say, 'This is America! Here are our mountains!' But at the same time, maybe I'm consciously oblivious to the fact that that's what we are doing. We're from the USA, so maybe it just comes out without thinking too much about it. Actually, a lot of stuff we do just 'comes out'..."

We will return to this intangible theory in due course. First, let's return to Band Of Horses' head stallion; their one constant since their 2004 inception.

Weightily bearded and heavily tattooed ("I'm not Doug Martsch from Built To Spill. That guy has got the most influential beard in indie rock!"), Ben Bridwell looks like a redneck and acts like an indie liberal. Nevertheless, it's been mooted that he is a difficult soul: three years ago the blogosphere was outraged when the singer castigated a fan from the stage for shooting live video of the band after Bridwell had asked him to stop. Today however, we find him nothing less than charming company.

Just don't get him started on blogs: "To me it's just sad," he said in 2007. "I think it's a sick, sad little fucking thing where the indie community need gossip and they need fucking rumours and they need it fast. New York is scary in that way – you come in and everyone seems like they write a blog!"

Keep Ben Bridwell talking about music, however, and you'll get on fine. Today he speaks with enthusiasm for his current favourites (the aforementioned Built To Spill, Cass McCombs), and possesses the sort of ye olde manners that earmark him as the quintessential Southern gent.

It's Ben's musical odyssey that is perhaps responsible for the rich fabric that makes Band Of Horses the special band they are. Leaving his hometown of Irmo, South Carolina at the turn of the millennium to pursue boyhood dreams of rock'n'roll glory ("As a child my family kept our doors open and went to bed with music playing loudly"; early loves: "Otis Redding, The Rolling Stones"; first ever show: "Four Tops, Temptations, O'Jays and LeVert"), he found himself drawn to Seattle, where, perhaps not considering the narcotic vibe of the scene he had arrived in, he set up the unfortunately monikered Brown Records – essentially to release records by one Carissa's Wierd, his own band.

By 2003, when Carissa's Wierd broke up, Ben still didn't feel his rock'n'roll itch had been sufficiently scratched. "We still had rehearsal space and guitars and shit, but I'd never written songs before. I figured that if I could complain about other bands around town then I should be able to write some fucking songs myself, so I started picking up instruments and seeing if I could find a way to make melody out of them. I got some other people together, then we signed to Sub Pop. It was very quick. It was very unexpected."

Flash-forward through two increasingly better than the last albums (2006's 'Everything All The Time', 2007's 'Cease To Begin'). A swathe of US media buzz. Some US TV soundtrack appearances that put their music in front of a demographic who'd never in a million years read a blog (their songs have featured on *One Tree Hill* and *The OC* and in 2007 they licensed songs to Ford and Wal-Mart – then dealt with the indie scene fall-out. "I've got to keep my family fed, but I don't really want people to think we're shitty corporate whores," said Ben at the time). There's also been a truly epic run of line-up changes, involving no less than 13 different members coming in and out (see box).

All this activity has culminated in 'Infinite Arms', Band Of Horses' defining statement. It was written and recorded across the breadth of the US – secluded cabins in the woods of Minnesota, the upcountry of South Carolina, remote studios in Muscle Shoals, Alabama. Consider the rustic heartbreak of 'Laredo', or the sunset joy of 'On My Way Back Home'; little wonder that these are songs with the pine-scent of the great American landscape. When writing the record, it was Ben's intention to isolate himself as much as possible and let his muse go.

Take the mellifluous 'Compliments' – ostensibly a doleful hypothesis on the existence of God. It's the sort of song that could only be realised with time and space to think and feel. At least we think it's about God.

"I don't really know what that one is about," says Ben.

Now, when most songwriters say things like that it's because they're being a) boring, b) lazy or c) are thick. But as a man who's written about many precise and unusual subjects before ('Cease To Begin' features a song about Seattle SuperSonics' now retired German basketball star Detlef Schrempf), you do sort of believe Ben when he says he can't place the meaning of one his songs. Even if he does give a hippy-ish answer to explain it.

"No, really," he continues. "It's not anything about religion or any of that kind of shit. That's one of the songs that kind of tapped me on the shoulder and wrote itself. I was on a lake among a bunch of trees and shit and that's just what came out, man. Sometimes they write themselves."

Careful, Ben. You're on the verge of saying 'the song was already there in the ether'.

"But sometimes songs *will* come to me. In a way it's overly sappy too. I have no control over what the songs come out like. We had a song on the second record called 'No-One's Gonna Love You'. When it come to me I thought, 'I'm in a band with a bunch of dudes and they're gonna fucking kill me for this one'. But I like to wallow in my own self-pity, and I love a sad song."

His songs 'come' from another – distressing – source too.

"I suffer from paranoia really badly," says Ben. "And the thing that inspires me most is, once I get into that horrible isolated area, I think I'm being watched."

Seriously?

"Seriously. I've written songs that are based specifically on that feeling. 'Is There A Ghost' from the last record was based on an ice-maker in my house that was freaking me out. And most of 'Ode To LRC' is about thinking I'm gonna be murdered when I'm in the cabin on the beach."

If you don't mind us asking, have drugs played much of a role in your life?

"Not as much as they used to," counters Ben. "I've always been a fan of smoking grass. When I'm writing I find marijuana helps with the paranoia. I think it's because I'm old now [*Ben is only 32 – Ageist Ed*]. If you don't smoke grass consistently it'll fuck you up – if you don't make a good habit out of it, it's easy to get messed up."

Somewhere a FRANK worker is banging their head on a brick wall, yet Band Of Horses'... horses do look to be coming in at once. With 'Infinite Arms' they've started functioning, in Ben's words, "like a real band," collaborating to the point where second guitarist Tyler Ramsey and keyboard player Ryan Monroe each take lead vocals on a track. Far from being a man losing his empire, Ben reckons, "It's great. It's like being in a real band or something."

Having now left Sub Pop, and having funded and produced the new album themselves, Ben and co also find themselves in a desirable position; getting major label bucks from Columbia to release 'Infinite Arms' in the UK, thereby allowing Ben to revive Brown Records to put it out in the US. There's even a nice nod to Ben's Seattle past in the shape of a US tour opening for Pearl Jam. But first, next month in fact, Band Of Horses come to the UK.

If you're going to any of the shows, a word to the wise; don't film the band on your video camera, or stare at the singer too intently. And what if Ben Bridwell does shout at you? Well, you can always close your eyes, picture some mountains, and console yourself by remembering you're watching the brilliant new/old sound of alternative America.

Listen again to NME Radio's interview with Band Of Horses at *NME.COM/radio*

BAND OF HORSES' REVOLVING STABLE DOOR

Many have come and many have gone during the Seattle band's six-year stretch. Here's the three who're the most prominent



MAT BROOKE
WHERE HE STARTED: Helped Bridwell put together BOH after the collapse of Carissa's Wierd.
WHY HE LEFT: Keen to stay in Seattle and to rock a little harder with his own band, Mat left BOH in 2006 to form Grand Archives.
WHAT HE'S UP TO NOW: Keeping the grunge flag flying back home in the northwest. Grand Archives released second album 'Keep In Mind Frankenstein' on Sub Pop last year.



TYLER RAMSEY
WHERE HE STARTED: Bearded Ryan Adams-ish singer-songwriter released 'A Long Dream About Swimming Across The Sea' in 2008.
WHY HE JOINED: Bassist Bill Reynolds struck up a friendship with Ramsey when BOH relocated to the songwriter's South Carolina hood.
WHAT HE'S UP TO NOW: Bridwell asked him to open on the 'Cease To Begin' tour, which led him to joining up full-time as second guitarist. Takes lead vocal on new album track 'Evening Kitchen'.



SERA CAHOONE
WHERE SHE STARTED: Occasionally played drums in Carissa's Wierd and on BOH's debut album.
WHY SHE LEFT: There was always a singing-songwriting indie-rock chanteuse waiting to butterfly from the drummer-girl.
WHAT SHE'S UP TO NOW: So far released two breathless solo albums, 2006's 'Sera Cahoone' and 2008's 'Only As The Day Is Long'.

WORDS: DAN MARTIN PHOTO: ANDREW WHITTON THANKS TO WWW.POPMATTERS.COM

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I LOVE MYSELF AN

*Meet **Kyle Thomas**, Sub Pop's most recent prince of dropout. Will his new band **Happy Birthday** mean he can finally move out of his parents' house? Will he ever get a proper job? And does indie have a new cult hero? **Gavin Haynes** asks the questions...*



Left to right: Chris, Ruth and Kyle

Kyle Thomas is the kind of guy who knows what he wants out of life – to live with his parents well into his late twenties. Actually, that's not all. He wants to tour more and only stay with them when he's on shore leave. But touring hasn't panned out as regularly as he'd have liked.

He's working on it, though. His new alias – he's the frontman of excellent new Sub Pop signings Happy Birthday, whose self-titled debut is blowing the minds of the slacker nation now – is going to sort all that. Oh yes. First though, he, mum, dad and younger brother are encamped at gran and gramps' house in LA, about to head off on a family holiday to Disneyland. He is particularly looking forward to the Small World ride – apparently a series of ethnographic wooden animatronics. He suggests that he may wear a pair of mouse ears. He may even be joking.

As much as the exercise in good clean family F-U-N that Uncle Walt intended, it will also be a chance for Kyle to source fresh candidates for his Mouse Memory book. "It's just one of the projects I'm working on," he says. "I collect people's memory drawings of Mickey Mouse. I'm always around a lot of interesting people, so it's almost like my own autograph book. I've got good ones – Kevin Shields, J Mascis, the guy from Fucked Up, Matt & Kim, Vivian Girls. I got 'em all." A thought strikes. He raises his slacker voice in exclamation. "I got all the mice!"

Kyle Thomas got all the mice. Take all the slack-pop clichés you know – being born in an artsy small town, a set of boho parents, comic book nerd, childlike introvert, skater, graphic artist, lo-fi, ex-punk, psych-popper, grunger, good friend of Dinosaur Jr frontman J Mascis ("J's picture is really good. He definitely knows how to draw a mouse"). Now roll them into one longhair with goofy shades, a record deal with the Pacific Northwest's most iconic and now resurgent indie label, and a mom to do his ironing, and you've got Kyle Thomas.

And while we wouldn't want to try for fear of making a mess, we bet if you sawed Kyle in half, his insides would read 'US indie's greatest new cult hero' like a stick of Brighton rock. Bought from, um, Rough Trade.

Consider the evidence: it's not just his work with Happy Birthday that stakes the claim – from his teenage bedroom in Brattleboro, rural Vermont, Kyle is master and commander of a vast armada of side-projects, aliases and invisible empires. Like any good cult hero, he's a man of many shapes – a situation born, he says, of his inability to stay still. He's prolific. Creatively ADD. "I have lots of very different types of songs that I write. If they don't fit the project I'm doing, then I just put them aside until I find one that it does match."





Top: Kyle last year enjoying an ice-cream; below: Kyle in 1997; far right: Kyle's "freaky" mother

"I'm not made for adult life. I want to keep a childlike mentality"

KYLE THOMAS

First there was the 2004 sylvan freakery of Feathers – a non-hierarchical, Brattleboro-based and Banhart-blessed avant-folk collective. Then, in 2006, he was talent-spotted by J Mascis for that man's Dinosaur side-project, Witch, on which J reverted to drums while Kyle played guitar and sang throaty stoner-metal homages to the great Blacks: Sabbath and Flag. More recently, and the project that really blasted him into the lower stratosphere of the underground elite, was 2008's King Tuff album – a set of swaggering, pouting, groinal late-'70s glam that donned the leather trousers of Iggy Pop and New York Dolls. That was what got Sub Pop tailing him. The staff were fans of the record; at South By Southwest last year they suggested he put out a seven-inch for them. Kyle said he'd go one better – how about an entire album of songs by his new band Happy Birthday? To their credit, Sub Pop lived up to every cliché of being low-slung goofballs. They said, "OK". Kyle didn't even let them hear any of the music until it was all done.

Then there's the unique melting pot of potential cultdom he grew up in. A small town with a big artsy reputation, Brattleboro is a stock joke in David Foster Wallace's novel *Infinite Jest* – a place populated by freaks, weirdos and boomer ex-hippies looking to 'reconnect'. "It has that reputation," drawls Kyle. "A lot of people try and move from the cities to start over with a rural lifestyle, but

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ID I WANT TO LIVE *(with my mom)*



most of them can't adapt, so they move back. Only the weirdos really linger..."

Yet, even in artland, for a youth of Kyle's temperament, small-town high school was "a nightmare". The baseball coaches were "drill sergeants". He "snoozed" through maths. The fact that he has a high school diploma remains "a mystery" to him. He'd already been writing songs since sixth grade, and soon regressed deeper into that world. He became a punk, his scalp topped by a gnarly red Mohican. If you ever want to check out what he looked like back then, there's a picture, above right, of his mum dressed up *as him* for a 1997 Halloween party – wearing his cavernous white punk pantaloons and a skanky black hoodie. That's just the sort of family they are. Kyle's mum, it soon transpires, is one of the coolest middle-aged women in rural Vermont.

"My parents are total freaks," he laments. "My mom is more friends with my friends than I am. My friends come over and I go to my room and she hangs out with them." Mrs Thomas works in a shoe shop and is reportedly "obsessed with buying people socks". In fact, Kyle is presently wearing a set she bought him – ones with little coloured guitars on them. Mr Thomas Sr "works the graveyard shift at the local mental hospital". It was he who turned Kyle onto comics, via his own vast collection of underground shit. "I grew up reading superhero comics. But my dad got me into a lot of '60s underground stuff. Really fucked-up pornographic countercultural stuff. Robert Crumb, yeah, but more like psychedelic comics: Jack Kirby – what he does is incredible."

The comics are the other side of his coin, but integral to his whole approach to being an artist – perhaps imagine Kyle as Leonardo's *Renaissance Man* with a few stale pizza crusts under his bed. In fact, much like New York's Jeffrey Lewis before him, he's often voiced the idea that his music is his visual art made audible. "I like the idea of 'comic book songs'. I'm trying to work out more how to do that. I just think a little bit of humour in the songs is really important to me. If I think about my music as cartoonish, it makes it easier to do. Plus my voice is like that of a demented kid."

He discusses another arm of his empire – a comic he's drawing which combines the Bizarro superhero world with The Beatles – a band who he has listened to obsessively for the past two years. When he and his Mouse Memory sketchbook make it back from the Magic Kingdom, he's going to have to make space for that one too, because only a month on from the first record's release, he's also in the throes of Happy Birthday's second – a sort of concept piece about dreams. "I've recently come to realise how weird dreams are. How we spend a third of our lives in the dreamworld and it's barely ever mentioned. It's the most exciting part of any life, I guess. Anything can happen. It's magical!"

Yet all Kyle's cult credentials wouldn't matter if his songs weren't any good. Thankfully, that's not the case. The present, self-titled, Happy Birthday record (made with his friends Chris and Ruthie) is a dippy magic roundabout that supercollides the two best strands of Sup Pop's modern era output – scuzzy lo-fi and twee. 'Girls FM', the lead track, resembles nothing closer than, well, Girls, specifically 'Lust For Life' if the underlying melancholy had all the poison sucked out, so that rather than being subversive it genuinely was the breezy tune billowing from the radio the day you graduated high school. 'Pink Strawberry Shake' is a fruity smoothie of Bolan slow-boogie and metaphors of carnal foreknowledge ("*I want to suck your strawberry pink shake*"); there's the Sparks Vs Roxy glam wobble of 'Subliminal Message', with its corrugated guitar solo spinning off at odd angles; and the grinding lo-fi 'Helter Skelter'-isms of 'Zit'. It's basically all a chuggy-fuggy, lo-fi version of MGMT's 'Congratulations'. It's awesome!

'Happy Birthday' will do good things for Kyle. Move him up in the world. Make him the talk of the scuzz-indie-loving town. Get him touring. Hell, he may even be able to move out of his parents' house. Or he may not... his mom doesn't mind either way. She certainly likes some of his songs. "She always says she likes the ones with the more hooky choruses," says Kyle. "Basically, she's just happy I'm doing *something*. Mom and pop are both really supportive of what I do."

There's a lesson to be learned from all this. It's a harsh dog-eat-dog world out there – if you let it be. Then again there are some folk who just aren't prepared to give up on the dreamworld. As a guy who's always idealising childhood ("I'm not made for adult life. Kids have more fun anyway. I think it's important to hold on to a childlike mentality for as long as possible..."), Kyle has spent a lifetime on the never-never, incubating his flights of fancy, protecting himself from the stuff that might break the beautiful, fragile spell of imagination he's cast over his own life. Moving out of his parents' might mean vacating those cloudy castles in the sky – and no-one who's enjoyed Kyle's flighty presence would want that.

Slacker nation! Thou hast a new God! Now go tidy your room...



MOMMY'S BOY

Judith Thomas on her son, Kyle

NME: Was Kyle always musical?
"Always. For Christmas when he was just two or three he really wanted a record player and his favourite song to play at that time was 'We Built This City' by Starship. Even when he was that little he was always singing."

Did you ever just fancy some peace?
"Not at all! We encouraged our children to pursue their passions. For Kyle, we always made sure there were lots of instruments around."

Do you have any songs of Kyle's you really like?
"Happy Birthday has a track called 'Fun' that I love. I also like 'Maxine The Teenage Eskimo'. I loved his old band, Feathers. That Witch band was more to my husband's tastes."

Do you ever wish he'd move out and get a proper job?
"He's hardly at home! I see evidence of him, like dirty dishes, but he's on a different schedule to me, so I don't see him much. We love having him around!"

ADDITIONAL INTERVIEWS: VALERIE SIEBERT

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“Man has become so intellectual he’s lost his connection to the spiritual”

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"I'm Thom Yorke's astral brother"

*As **Flying Lotus**, California's **Steven Ellison** is doing for dubstep what Radiohead did for rock. He's also a bit of a space cadet who wants to take you on more than just a musical trip...*

There are reasons people like 26-year-old Steven Ellison don't wind up trapped in a desk job. Described by Radio 1's dubstep queen Mary Anne Hobbs as "this generation's Hendrix", Ellison's output as Flying Lotus is the work of a man who has genius where his blood should be. The thoughtful, soft-spoken LA native's aunt and uncle were the late, great Alice and John Coltrane, the pair whose free jazz pioneered avenues new music still wanders today.

FlyLo also runs Brainfeeder, one of the planet's most influential beat labels, and counts Thom Yorke as a fan. The pair are currently touring together (Yorke with new side-project Atoms For Peace) while the Radiohead frontman guests on Ellison's new album 'Cosmogramma', an utterly bewildering, magical record that made many at *NME freak out* the first time we heard it (unsurprising, perhaps, given Ellison's taste for the kind of hallucinogens that'll have you dangling from God's nasal hairs).

Fittingly, Ellison gets as high as the stars, gliding through space-junk and J Dilla's ghost, so he can peer down at the hurtling, peaceful blue-green ball below and finally get round to sussing it out for us. If you don't know anything about him already, here's where you might want to start.

'Cosmogramma' is a "space opera"...

"I really tried to get into the headspace of the universe on this album. That's the goal. I really want to create this huge film of what's in my head, but with music. I wanna make movies too – for real, for real – but for now it's music. I like for people to travel places, experience something else beyond this experience. That's what music's for, you know? I've been through a lot [Steven's mother passed away in 2008], especially between making the last record ['Los Angeles'] and this one, and I've learned a lot about life and music, and what it is that I'm here to do. I want to add to this incredible conversation we've been having with music for hundreds of years. We have to build something new. We have to understand the experience here on this planet and then let the music be the way to say it all. The idea of outer space is funny, but it's really about inner space, isn't it? Understanding the cosmos within. Understanding the god within, whatever that is. You created this experience, you created this world – your soul has created me, that person over there and everything else around you."

His hometown's not all boob jobs and Hollywood...

"What do I think of when people say the words 'Los Angeles'? I see the music community; I see getting stuck in traffic. I see other people's ideas of what LA's all about – I can see why some of them think LA's this phoney, plastic place full of celebrities and boob jobs. That's not my reality. It's definitely there, but I think that idea of life is universal. I've seen enough of the world to know you can find the vainest people in Bombay and the most 'Hollywood' motherfuckers in Japan."

Music's in his blood...

"As I get older I start to understand my late aunt's music more and more. Listening to her album 'Lord Of Lords' when I was making 'Cosmogramma' really moved me. I'm trying to understand my family's history, and I got the sense that that album was the one she had to make to comprehend the death of her husband. After I lost my mother recently, this record made so much sense – it wasn't in a dark or evil place, it was about the journey of the spirit. The ascension story. Despite all the pain I felt when I was making 'Cosmogramma' there are a lot of beautiful things in my life too, so it had to be more than just 'dark' – my ascension, my mother's ascension, my aunt's ascension. I knew her as a spiritual person rather than a musician – all that music was made years before, and if you tried to talk to her about old records she couldn't tell you anything about them. 'Oh, did I play harp on that song?' (*laughs*)"

He describes Thom Yorke as his "astral brother"...

"I've been a fan of his since I was a teenager. I see lots of similarities between us – we were born on the same day, stuff like that. In this dream I had one night I was an accomplice to a murder, and just ended up walking the streets alone before running into Thom in a grocery store. When I woke up, I had an email from him asking me to tour with his new band Atoms For Peace. I'd met him a couple of times before that, so it wasn't too out of the ordinary for him to crop up in my subconscious I guess – Mary Anne Hobbs told him he needed to be on my new album. We got that track ['...And The World Laughs With You'] done real fast. I wanna work with Björk next, so maybe I'll try to dream about her and this time next year we'll be working together!"

He's inspired by the copycats...

"I've definitely been able to hear some stuff, you know (*laughs*)? Over the years, little things. It kind of surprises me what people lift off my sound. It encourages me to step up my ideas. A lot of 'Cosmogramma' came from the frustration of hearing lots of kids trying to do my last record. I had to step out on my own, expand and get even more personal with the sound, so that it couldn't be replicated at all."

He's had out-of-body experiences...

"Stuff happens to me all the time in dreams. I get all sorts of messages. I had sleep paralysis in the back of a car on the way to a festival in London once – I woke up and could see my friends all around me, but couldn't move. Without that paralysis you'd be able to pull yourself away from your physical body and take on another form. I think man's become so intellectual he's lost his connection to the spiritual realm. There are other parts of the brain that can be used – for psychic ability, intuition."

He believes in ancient aliens...

"We all have to re-learn our histories, whether that's American history, black history, or before that, even – *ancient* histories. Who knows, man, what about ancient astronauts (*laughs*)? There are lots of things here for us as people that when you think about it, you gotta say: 'Why are these things here? Why do we have plants on this planet that let you see things you wouldn't otherwise be able to see? Why do we have plants here that'll change a man's perspective? Have they been planted here by those ancient astronauts?'"

He's liable to go on the occasional narcotic adventure...

"I think DMT [a psychotropic drug found in the sap of plants] is great because it's an experience that's beyond this experience. I'm the kind of person who needs to see things to believe them – I've hallucinated a lot without psychedelics. Out-of-body experiences, astral travelling... going to space, man! I know there's more. If you never try that – if you've never seen anything more than 'London', or whatever – you're blasted into another dimension my friend. All the things you've seen are taken from you, and you're placed in some other space. For people who don't believe in anything at all it'd be completely alien, but I highly recommend it, because it's a very natural experience. People don't realise we do it all the time. We have a DMT trip every night when we dream, and no-one cares! Why do we do that?! What the fuck are dreams *for*, man?! Every night we drift off into our subconscious and experience things almost as real as 'real'. To me, DMT just makes a lot of sense. But it's such a serious thing that I don't do it often. It's a very powerful experience – afterwards the world's not the same."

What's On Ellison's Playlist?

Jeremiah Jae
'Vertical Pupils'
"I really believe in what he's doing. He's so switched on."

Soft Machine
'As Long As He Lies Perfectly Still'
"One of the most inspiring tracks. It's where I'd like to see my own music go."

Erykah Badu
'Window Seat'
"My boy Thundercat's all over that shit, it feels good!"

Samiyam
'It's Not A Fluke'
"He's got that 'rebellious little man' sound I really love."

Jaga Jazzist
'Book Of Glass'
"When talented musicians are paired with computers."

WORDS: KEV KHARAS PHOTO: TIM SACCENTI

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INTRODUCING THE BAND...

When Deborah Coughlin brought a few of her friends together above a pub in east London early last year, she couldn't have realised how much we would need Gaggle. As the cast of *Glee* smother the charts with their saccharine strangulation of pop classics, it's been left to these worldly women to save the reputation of the choir. Now with 25 members, they're more a neon riot grrrl rave army than a band, and are soon poised to embark on the crazy task of fitting in a Transit van and embarking on their first UK tour. We thought it was time to speak to the women of Gaggle. All 25 of them. Well, almost*...

PHOTOGRAPH
DANNY NORTH

WORDS
SAM WOLFSON

1 Gaggle name: Coughlin
Job in Gaggle: "I'm chief Gaggle, so my job is to make it work. If that means going to the other side of London to wake a Gaggle up and get them on the bus, then so be it.
I also have to tell them how to sing, although it's normally things like 'Scream like you're about to come', or 'Do it again, but this time, like you're communists'. I also enforce the Gaggle code of conduct: no fucking anyone's boyfriend or girlfriend. No taking drugs before you go onstage. No lying."
Who are you? "I went to convent school. Then I was a music journalist in Iceland. Then I was in an art-rock band called 586. Now I do this."
I love: "All the charm-bracelet charms that the Gaggles bought me for my birthday."
I hate: "Liars. Pete Doherty."
Interesting fact: "When I was 13 I had a drumming lesson from Phil Collins. That's why I can't drum."

2 Culwick
Who are you? "I'm a scriptwriter and I collect bangles."
I love: "Cheese, chocolate, Cambodia."
I hate: "That you can't attack a burglar that's in your house."
Interesting fact: "I nearly died in November. I was on the verge of death. Now I'm fine!"

3 Kumari
Who are you? "I work on the government's counter-terrorism strategy."
I love: "Sufi poetry. I'm a Muslim and it shows a side of Muslims that people don't see."
I hate: "People who don't vote."
Interesting fact: "I 'piloted' a plane once. I was flying from Yorkshire to London. But about 30 seconds into it I freaked and was so hideously sick that we had to have an unscheduled landing. When we got back on the plane, I curled into a ball and listened to 'Thriller' on repeat 'til we landed."

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4 Miss Miss
Who are you? "I'm a secondary school English teacher but I don't tell the students about Gaggle. Luckily I don't work with any indie kids, so no-one's found out."
I love: "People who surprise me."
I hate: "Indecisiveness."
Interesting fact: "When I was very young I volunteered for an arts centre in Portugal. I ended up in a room with loads of ex-drug addicts, and people who really needed help. I wasn't qualified in any way, I was 18. They all tried to rape me (*bursts out laughing*)."

5 Alibi
Who are you? "I grew up in a small fishing village in Sussex that was renowned for key-swapping parties."
I love: "Gravy and mashed potato."
Interesting fact: "I've got a phobia of paper plates. I've had to have therapy for it. I use to have a recurring nightmare where someone was throwing china plates at my head, but I've transferred that fear to paper ones. They just freak me out; I even have to avoid the [paper plate] aisle in Tesco."

Need To Know

The band's debut single is called 'I Hear Flies'. Watch the video on *NME.COM/video*. It only cost 50 quid!

Gaggle recently played in France. It cost them €3,000 to get all their members out there.

Honorary Gaggles have been onstage with the band: Huw Stephens, *NME*'s James McMahon and Rebecca Robinson and, recently, Summer Camp's Elizabeth Sankey – her Gaggle name is Chapstick.

6 Bignar Von Bluu
Who are you? "I was born in Zagreb in the former Yugoslavia. During the war, that wasn't fun at all. I spent a year and a half in a basement, hiding from the bombs."
Interesting fact: "When I was 15 I ran away from home to see the Sex Pistols in Slovenia."

7 Wunderla
Job in Gaggle: "I'm a peacemaker."
Who are you? "I write for an entertainment website about important issues like Justin Bieber and anything that's related to *Twilight*."
I hate: "Cankles. It's when an old woman's calves are the same width as their ankles. It's my greatest fear; it's like a trunk."
Interesting fact: "I want to be one of Tiger Woods' mistresses."

8 Delilah
Who are you? "I grew up in Trinidad. I play at J'Ouvert, which is like the dark side of carnival. It runs from sunset to sunrise and it's all mud and oil and darkness and devils."
I hate: "The 29 bendy bus."
Interesting fact: "I'm the one screaming on Gaggle's first single 'I Hear Flies'."

9 D
Who are you? "I moved to Venezuela when I was five. The laws are quite flexible there. My friends would take one of their parents' cars and we'd get really drunk and get stopped by cops who we paid off."
Interesting fact: "When I went back to Israel I got drafted into the army. I had to go to a tribunal to get out of it."

10 Launette
Job in Gaggle: "I provide everyone with chocolate and dietary advice."
Who are you? "I spent my teenage years locked in my bedroom in Eastbourne listening to John Peel and Steve Lamacq. Now I live in London and make raw chocolate."
I love: "Vintage clothes from the late '60s, English psych-folk, *Steptoe And Son*, *Poirot*. I'm an 80-year-old in a 26-year-old's body."
I hate: "White bread."
Interesting fact: "I only eat raw food."

11 Honey
Job in Gaggle: "I'm the naughty one."
Who are you? "I design clothes, and I did all the Gaggle costumes for this shoot."
I love: "Beaches, my grandma."
Interesting fact: "I eat whole bulbs of garlic and I'm quite a touchy-feely person. When we're on the bus I have a garlic feast and then smother the other Gaggles with my breath."

12 Green
Job in Gaggle: "When we played in France I spoke for French for all of us."
Who are you? "I run Chief Originals, which is a T-shirt company."
I love: "Gilles Peterson, modesty, my 1983 Mercedes."
I hate: "Too many people."
Interesting fact: "When I was a baby I was a model in a Kentucky Fried Chicken advert."

13 Talulah
Job in Gaggle: "Medical staff."
Who are you? "I discovered gin at the age of 13. Since then I've done four degrees – Archaeology, History Of Art, Italian, History – now I'm a student nurse."
I love: "Swimming in the sea naked."
Interesting fact: "I was in Sri Lanka during the tsunami."

14 Venus
Who are you? "I'm an art student."
I love: "Sex, learning, myself."
I hate: "Ignorance, stigmatising and preconceptions. I'm from Essex and I go to art school – I get it rough."
Interesting fact: "My mum used to hang out with the Kray twins."

15 Spawn Of Gaggle
Job in Gaggle: "I'm the boy! I help write the music with Coughlin."
Who are you? "I used to be in a band with Coughlin called 586. And I'm a carpenter, so I'm very handy with a soldering iron."
I love: "Music. I know that sounds clichéd, but I don't do a lot else really. I'm into circuit bending and stripping down synths too."
I hate: "People that only listen to one type of music."

16 Gusset
Job in Gaggle: "I'm always the one with the lipstick or the hairspray."
Who are you? "I did a PhD in Literature about four years ago, so I'm an actual doctor. Now I work at a paparazzi agency for money."
Interesting fact: "When I was five, I was diagnosed with vocal nodules. I was told at the time that I wouldn't be allowed to sing or whisper or shout or I'd be mute by the time I was 13. It's nice to finally be able to sing."

17 McClean
Who are you? "I work for an art gallery in southeast London."
I love: "Macaroni cheese and photographs."
I hate: "When people talk about 'post-feminism' – by which I mean women who supposedly do pole-dancing because it's empowering – and Gaggle in the same sentence. We're the exact opposite of that."
Interesting fact: "I have Michael Portillo's number and I text him every New Year's Eve."

18 Aquila
I love: "Jamie Lidell. I want him. When I broke up with my boyfriend I cycled to the beach with him blaring on my iPod, took all my clothes off and ran in the sea."
I hate: "Peroxide blonde girls in sequins."
Interesting fact: "I had a shower with David Cameron when I was 16. It was in Chipping Norton, in his constituency, and it was in the communal shower of the swimming pool."

19 Namsoo
Who are you? "I'm writing a novel about an old lady, magic and mental illness."
I hate: "People that complain but don't do anything about it."
Interesting fact: "I'm in the video dentists show to kids when they have to get braces."

20 Poly Dorou
Who are you? "I was crowned the princess of my village when I was eight."
I love: "*Lord Of The Rings*. Frodo is *hot*."
I hate: "Men on trains, they're so rude. I'm only five foot and they just jump in front of me and cough in my face."
Interesting fact: I once skied into a children's ski school. I gave one of them concussion and broke another one's bum."

* 21 – KIKI (NOT PRESENT AT INTERVIEW DUE TO "STUPID, STRICT US VISA ISSUES"); 22 – LEXI (ON HOLIDAY IN THAILAND); 23 – STRICK (TOO DRUNK TO CONTRIBUTE); 24 – LIPSTICK ("HAVING A QUIET NIGHT"); 25 – LUDDITE (NOT NUMBERED OR PICTURED "DUE TO HAVING MY HOUSE BURGLED!")

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REVIEWS

THIS WEEK: FUTUREHEADS KEEP IT REAL, AVI BUFFALO'S SUB POP REVIVAL AND HARLEM'S FUSS-FREE FUN

Edited by Emily Mackay



MARK & SMITH ON...

Art: "Everybody I know in Manchester is an artist, they just don't go out and sell it. They're as good as anybody I've ever seen."

***The Fallen*, the book that catalogues the former members of his band:** "It's like a dirty book I keep under the stairs, a porn book."

Sacking Marc 'Lard' Riley: "He was surrounded by people from *NME* telling him he was the bee's knees. But you can't eat the reviews."

THE FALL

YOUR FUTURE, OUR CLUTTER DOMINO

Mark E Smith's scabrous wit, defiant strangeness and constant invention still continue to put newer pretenders to shame

In 1998, God-bothering entertainer of the Wimbledon tennis crowds Cliff Richard managed to overcome public and music industry prejudice by releasing a 12-inch single under the name 'Blacknight'. The track was an immediate hit with radio playlists – until producers discovered the artist's true identity. It's hard not to wish The Fall would consider a similar tactic. For although the three-decade history of Mark E Smith's troupe doesn't contain a 'Mistletoe And Wine', every album is judged by the weight of the past.

Really, we should be sat in NME Towers, looking at a press shot (the ravaged glare of MES Photoshopped out) of three young bruisers from Salford and an icily gorgeous German with black hair, putting 'Your Future, Our Clutter' on the stereo, and demanding that the cover be cleared for an exposé on The Best New Band In Britain. Because that is what The Fall, on their 28th album, still clearly are.

For other Best New Bands In Britain are never entirely new. You can always hear the guilty squeak of the floorboard as they approach music's dressing-up box, from which they take tattered rags from 10, 20, 30 years ago and use them, like the proverbial Emperor, to cover their nakedness. 'Your Future, Our Clutter', on the other hand, is cut from rare cloth of mysterious weave. It's an audacious album of lyrical wit, a defiant record of pugnacious bass, samples from a certain robot-helmet-wearing French electro duo, tangential guitar, synth noise and dark mutterings, much of which concern Smith's experience of the medical profession following a spate of broken bones.

From a lesser mortal than Smith you might ascribe such a musical gee-up to the fact that The Fall are now signed to Domino, the same label as Arctic Monkeys and Franz Ferdinand, both groups who have attracted his ire – Smith suggested that the Arctics ought to give up on music to open a chain of chip shops.

Curiously, there's a thick-set, lumbering quality to 'Hot Cake' that you could imagine being ground out somewhere in the desert by Alex Turner and co. But you get the feeling that they'd never have made the crucial leap to add that weird 'brrrring' noise, or the "*ah ah oooos*" from MES' wife Elena. The same goes for the second half of 'YFOC/Slippy Floor', which suddenly bursts into a lusty rock'n'tumble after a hulking bass intro, snappy drums, and talk of "*tales... from the Castleford crypt*" and "*the encyclopaedia of building and plumbing*". But these are merely some of the most straightforward moments here.

'Bury Pts 1 + 3' starts off as a distant, fuzzy stomp, as if you're stood outside some warehouse as the latest hot scruffs play inside. It suddenly emerges into clarity, and what was garage simplicity suddenly has oodles of Teutonic Moog, threatening lyrics about "*a Spanish king with a council of bad knaves*" and references to Squirrelgate, when Smith was investigated by the RSPCA for saying that he killed some of the fluffy rodents for eating his fence. It's this unselfconscious sense of difference that sets The Fall apart. In a world with so many earnest beards pretending to be cowboys that we're almost out of stools, 'Cowboy George' is afternoon telly spaghetti western imagined by a paranoid Ritalin fiend: "*unseen footage... unseen knowledge*", Smith growls, a sample of Daft Punk's 'Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger' making an unexplained appearance.

Most startling of all is 'Weather Report 2', with its delicate guitar introduction giving way to huge banks of electronic noise, like nuclear fallout floating gently down over a sylvan valley. The track ends with a bizarre whispered statement: "*Never mind Jackson/What about Saxons/Recordings of lost London/You don't deserve rock'n'roll*". Faced with The Fall, the Best New Band In Britain until Smith is perched on a cloud supping Pilsner and winding up John Lennon, it's hard not to agree. ***Luke Turner***

8

DOWNLOAD: 'Weather Report 2', 'Chino', 'Cowboy George'

Read a Q&A with Mark E Smith at *NME.COM/theoffice*

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PEARLY GATE MUSIC

PEARLY GATE MUSIC BELLA UNION



When the Grim Reaper finally takes his swing and we scamper up that golden staircase to stand before St Peter, in the few blissful seconds before he casts us down to the flaming torment where we rightfully belong, we hope that the harp-strains that catch our ears are as beautiful as this debut. Seattle songwriter Zach Tillman, brother of Fleet Foxes drummer Josh, is a self-confessed slacker with a saintly soul. He's more a tortured and worldly Augustine that a smugly martyred Sebastian, though, and his beatific, spacious songs, as much Spiritualized as they are psych-folk, are often far from angelic. "*Oh god, I'm an animal/Don't tell anyone you saw the state I'm in*", he frets on 'Gossamer Hair'. As reward for such sweet spiritual wranglings, though, comes the peace that passeth all understanding of 'I Was A River', where, radiant and clear, Tillman hymns "*If I was your lapdog/I'd forget everything and just sleep*". Now, that sounds like heaven. ***Emily Mackay***

DOWNLOAD: 'I Was A River' **7**

GOGOL BORDELLO

TRANSCONTINENTAL HUSTLE AMERICAN



It shouldn't matter but it does. When Madonna adopted Gogol Bordello, like some photogenically saucer-eyed African toddler, as her latest musical plaything, they became perceptibly less lovable. And so their first post-Madge album is also their first to arrive without an automatic 'Gypsy punk! Charismatic frontman! Accordions! Five out of five!' stamp on it. As it happens, the temptation to allow their patroniser (matroniser?) in for some intrusive guest slots is resisted, and so 'Transcontinental Hustle' is fine and dandy, with Eugene Hutz's breakneck folk tempered by the influence of his adopted homeland Brazil. Musically, it's really just more of the boozy, ribald, shoutalong same, but tellingly the best moments are when Hutz reins in his mentalist troubadour shtick, on the delightful 'Sun On My Side' and the slow-burning, epic 'When Universes Collide'. Generally, though, Gogol still sound like a wild pan-cultural fiesta. ***Pete Cashmore***

DOWNLOAD: 'Sun On My Side' **6**

ANAÏS MITCHELL

HADESTOWN RIGHTEOUS BABE



It's difficult to greet the terms 'folk opera' and 'concept album' with anything but the skin-crawling revulsion usually reserved for headlines about 'Broken Britain'. Particularly so when they concern a rather portentous-sounding retelling of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice transported to Depression-era New Orleans. But Anaïs Mitchell's 'Hadestown' allays any potential awfulness with an easy grace that defies any accusations of pretension. Anaïs plays Eurydice, her naïve hiccupy tones contrasting gorgeously with Ani DiFranco's sagacious turn as her mother, Persephone. Bon Iver's Justin Vernon was surely born to play Orpheus, whose lovelorn song broke Hades' malignant soul. It's nothing short of incredible, whether you extract individual tracks like 'Wedding Song' – where Eurydice worries about money while Orpheus looks to the trees for solutions – or listen to the endearing tale as an artfully rollicking whole. Mitchell has always been good, but 'Hadestown' is her *Odyssey*. ***Laura Snapes***

DOWNLOAD: 'Wedding Song' **9**

Faces To Names...

What the reviewers are doing this week



LUKE TURNER
"I've been on a massive cheesefinding mission to Devon to a soundtrack of The Fall and Norway's acoustic black metal troupe Wardruna."



LISA WRIGHT
"Rewatching *Heathers* again, becoming obsessed with Brooklyn art electro-disco collective MEN, and getting massively bruised seeing Foals. It was worth every blow."



JAMES MCMAHON
"I went to see *Until The Light Takes Us*, a documentary about Norwegian black metal. Then I resisted the urge to scrawl a pentagram into the skin of a tramp."



MATT WILKINSON
"I learnt the Bergerac theme on guitar, and also got stuck in a lift. When the doors finally opened, Ricky Gervais and Stephen Merchant were stood opposite me. YEAH!"



THE FUTUREHEADS

THE CHAOS NUL

Beneath the familiar spikiness, there's enough off-kilter derangement to justify the bold title



The Futureheads are a bit like the art-pop Heinz beans; despite the occasional professed new and improved recipe they'll always reliably and essentially remain the same. You might stray over to a newer, seemingly more exciting pulse, but you'll always end up crawling back because there's no beating a bit of spiky, saucy familiarity.

From the outset then, 'The Chaos' is undeniably a vintage 'Heads album, its "*Five, four, three, two, one... GO*" opening gambit recalling the teetering anticipation that begins 'Man Ray', wrapped around a 'The Beginning Of The Twist'-esque driving guitar romp underscored by a slightly wobbly, off-kilter discordance. So, basically all the good bits of their previous three efforts distilled into one song. 'The Baron', too, treads a similar path, the post-punk clatter at its core as comfortingly recognisable as a favourite nook in the sofa but with enough XTC-ish oddball tinges to keep the interest sparked, while single 'Heartbeat Song' flashes by in two-and-a-half minutes of no-nonsense Mackem indie-punk.

It's with the surprisingly bleak 'Sun Goes Down', however, that the album's dramatic title finally starts to click into place. Yes, the spiky edges and distinguishable vocals are still present, but, as the recognisable jerk-and-thrash chorus descends there's a myriad of tormented howls that'd give Lars Von Trier the willies. It's a hint of... well, chaos, that shows a different side to Sunderland's most lovable.

Maybe it's the continued freedom that comes with being your own boss (as with 2008's 'This Is Not The World', 'The Chaos' is issued on their own label, Nul Records), or maybe it's a delayed reaction to their reported near-split a few years back, but there's certainly something up because 'Jupiter''s opening harmonics are as mad as a box of frogs. If Queen had relocated up north to pen ditties about the solar system, you'd be vaguely close to its sound. The fact that, as quickly as they appeared, the vocal anomalies are replaced by a choppy guitar lick makes it all the more bizarre, like some kind of bemusing hallucination.

Though The Futureheads' established formula still sticks steadfast, there are enough wild cards peppered throughout to prove that, far from stuck in a rut, they're still moving playfully forward. This is chaos you can revel in. ***Lisa Wright*** **7**

DOWNLOAD: 'The Baron', 'The Chaos', 'Jupiter'

To win a pair of tickets to the show of your choice on their upcoming tour, plus a signed album, go to *NME.COM/win*. Watch the video to 'Heartbeat Song' at *NME.COM/video*

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AVI BUFFALO

AVI BUFFALO SUB POP

The second summer of Sub Pop blooms into a bittersweet, magnificent debut album



Say what you like about Americans – eg having pancakes for breakfast really can't be beneficial to a balanced diet - when it comes to indie rock there's isn't anyone better at it. This week's reminder of that fact is Avi Buffalo. Four teenagers from Long Beach, California, who spearhead a new wave of bands (Dum Dum Girls, Happy Birthday) who are each propelling the iconic Seattle label Sub Pop back to its former glories.

Avi Buffalo are led by a 19-year-old songwriting genius called Avigdor Zahner-Isenberg and all the songs on his band's debut are about a young man undergoing a mental collapse. But, for all his fragility, Avi is as good a songwriter as anyone who's ever traded under Sub Pop's logo. And that's quite a claim.

Alongside schoolfriends Arin Fazio and Sheridan Riley on bass and drums, Avi's girlfriend Rebecca Coleman sings back-up and plays keyboards; her reedy but pretty voice going some way to disguise her beau's torments. Take this line from 'Summer Cum': "*Go on and tell your friends how I can't rearrange my skin/They've made up stories based on me so everyone could feel at ease*", frets Avi, who sings a little bit like Daniel Johnston and Mark Linkous' lovechild.

There's a lot of prettying up of this darkness going on, much of it by Avi himself; his guitar playing – akin to Johnny Marr playing a Tortoise song – give the likes of 'Remember Last Time', and the record's best song 'What's In It For?' a zig-zagging fluidity.

It's often reported that Mark Arm, Mudhoney frontman and former punk rock Lord of the Pacific Northwest, still works at Sub Pop as their warehouse manager. Remembering the days when the label would print T-shirts saying 'WHAT PART OF NO MONEY DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND' to ward off bailiffs must make him feel old. The arrival of Avigdor Zahner-Isenberg on the scene must make him feel *ancient*. ***James McMahon*** **9**

DOWNLOAD: 'Summer Cum', 'What's In It For?', 'Where's Your Dirty Mind?'

To win a signed Avi album, go to *NME.COM/win*

JAGUAR LOVE

HOLOGRAM JAMS FAT POSSUM



The Blood Brothers may be an underground delight we can only reminisce about these days, but their frequency-confusing founder Johnny Whitney and best bud Cody Votolato are still making music like their former band. 'Hologram Jams' is their first release since the loss of drummer (and former Pretty Girls Make Graves member) Jay Clark. And, we like the schizophrenic drum machine duo vibe a lot more. Flooded with lyrical satire and engulfed in more tunage than an air piano contest, 'Cherry Soda' endorses move-busting belly laughs. JL have dropped a weird pop record so humorously danceable that Ke$ha's probably planning a collaboration as we type. ***Kelly Murray*** **7**

DOWNLOAD: 'I Started A Fire'

JEFF ANTEBI

JESSE MALIN & THE ST MARKS SOCIAL

LOVE IT TO LIFE SIDEONEDUMMY



Well-connected he may be (previous collaborators include Springsteen and Ryan Adams, while 'Love...' features the diverse likes of Brian Fallon and Mandy Moore buried in the mix), but Malin's musical output has never been quite as impressive as his phonebook. 'Love It To Life', unfortunately, continues the trend: 'Burning The Bowery', 'Revelations' and 'The Archer' are perfectly serviceable MOR, but Malin lacks the keen eye for observations that makes his peers – on the clumsy 'Lowlife In A High Rise' he aims for Westerberg but lands at Jarman – such icons. By no means terrible but, sadly, more or less superfluous. ***Rob Parker*** **5**

DOWNLOAD: 'All The Way From Moscow'

Key Notes

Best sleeve of the week



Pearly Gate Music 'Pearly Gate Music'
Who is the owl man? Where is he going? What has he done with your children? We don't have the answers.

Worst sleeve of the week



Gogol Bordello 'Transcontinental Hustle'
We've never felt less like sparing any change.

Best lyric of the week

"I watched Murder She Wrote *at least five times/The cast deserved to die"*
The Fall 'Weather Report 2'

Worst lyric of the week

"I can't be bothered to complain about the weather/I got a light step and I float like a feather"
The Futureheads 'Living On Light'

Reviewed Next Week...

Foals
'Total Life Forever'
Hole
'Nobody's Daughter'
Factory Floor 'Untitled'
Chris Morris' *Four Lions*

GUILLAUME & THE COUTU DUMONTS

BREAKING THE FOURTH WALL CIRCUS COMPANY



You want a soundbite? Tough. Canadian Berliner Guillaume Coutu Dumont has too much going on. Driven less by laptop and drum machine than intricate Afro-Latin percussion and proper instruments, GCD morphs effortlessly between deep house, minimal techno and a supra-modern approximation of – gulp! – acid jazz. It's curious, intense, sometimes brilliant stuff, which for all its many reference points – echoes of the muggy abstraction of New York's hip Wolf + Lamb label; a collaboration with Parisian house music stars *du jour* dOP – defies categorisation. The astringent ambient hallucination 'Unwelcome', for instance, would sound at home on These New Puritans' 'Hidden'. Go figure. ***Tony Naylor*** **7**

DOWNLOAD: '32 Tonnes De Pigeons'

WALLS

WALLS KOMPAKT



Alessio Natalizia of crispy electronicists Banjo Or Freakout started making music because he was waiting for his girlfriend at her house and it seemed a more agreeable pastime than talking to her flatmates. Electronica bod Sam Willis of Allez Allez was drafted in to remix his first single 'Mr No' and ever since they have been known as Walls. Dealing in woozy digital and analogue electronic psychedelic noise, their joyful wash of tuneful hooks is a wake-up call to lazy Animal Collective copyists with loop pedals everywhere. Feeling as fresh as Boards Of Canada, cLOUDDEAD and Spiritualized did at their inceptions this is the must-have OST for intronauts everywhere. ***John Doran*** **9**

DOWNLOAD: 'Burnt Sienna'

Who The Hell Are You?

Given your name, aren't you worried about legal action from the similarly-titled dog-ventriloquist banger-mongers?

Alessio Natalizia: "The sausage people? I think we're more worried that people will confuse us with the heavy metal band from Texas called Walls. They are really bad!"

What would be worse – somebody turning up at one of your gigs who just wants to rock out and bang their head to some metal or a blissed-out chill wave fan accidentally turning up to watch the death metal Walls and expecting to have a relaxing evening?

"It would be much worse for the chill wave fan of course!"

JOHN & JEHN

TIME FOR THE DEVIL NAIVE



With sodding theme parks now competing over who's got the gothiest fucking rollercoaster, *Twilight* has a lot to answer for. And French dark-pop duo John & Jehn are barging to the front of the cash-in queue, ticking every cultural box within reach: a Joy Division (tick!) meets The Horrors (tick!) girl/boy duo (tick!) with a subtle '80s sparkle (tickety-tick!) singing songs called 'Vampire', 'Ghosts', 'Time For The Devil' and 'Shy' (TIIIIIII-KAH!). In a fair world they'd tick themselves into instant cliché, but there's a Gallic lightness to the Banshees pop of 'Vampire' or the Bunnymen chug of 'And We Run' that entrances like the whirlpool eyes of the dishy undead. Cheese and chills in equal measure. ***Mark Beaumont*** **7**

DOWNLOAD: 'Vampire'

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HARLEM

HIPPIES MATADOR

Fed up of over-thinking? These chorus-happy garage-rockers will blow your mind clean



This Texan trio's self-released debut 'Free Drugs', pretty much sounded like a bunch of kids taking loads of gak and fucking around in their parents garage at 5am. On 'Hippies', the Austin boys celebrate a new deal with Matador by groggily embracing adulthood, armed with an unhealthy but honourable stash of squidgy black and *hundreds* of obscure Phil Spector records to rip off.

Lazy, subtonic London beats provide salacious bedding for their 'Raw Power'-era Stooges shtick. The band's major plus point lies in the fact they know how to pen seriously good choruses, and with any luck that'll set them apart from the comparisons with the likes of Black Lips and The Strange Boys that'll no doubt dog them as soon as tales of 'Hippies" brilliance seep out.

There's 12 amazing, singalong beauties here. The chorus on opener 'Someday Soon' lasts for the entire length of the song, which is actually genius. Why don't they all do it?! They do it again on 'Number One'! It works!

Meanwhile, singers Michael Coomers and Curtis O'Mara effortlessly spit out messed-up melodramas sung as earnestly as any of Phil's protégés, but deal with unwholesome subjects such as toothless hitchhikers, three-legged dogs and living in a graveyard. True, their Tycoon Of Teen obsession is pretty obvious, but it's more a puppyish want or need to replicate than some wanky art-school homage. The band are smart enough to know they don't need to fully understand their Spector influences. They just realise that a great melody is all you need. From the killer riff that opens 'Gay Human Bones' to the surf-rock chorus of 'Tila And I' and 'Spray Paint"s ska-lite-heavy guitar line, they've got them in spades.

'Hippies' is an uncomplicated, brilliant LP about what it's like to be young, stoned and having A REALLY GOOD TIME while *not* coming across like you're a complete tool. ***Matt Wilkinson*** **8**

DOWNLOAD: 'Gay Human Bones', 'Someday Soon', 'Number One'

FROG EYES

PAUL'S TOMB: A TRIUMPH DEAD OCEANS



Unlike the last simpering effort by his Canuck collective Swan Lake, Carey Mercer's fifth album as Frog Eyes is a furiously lobbed Molotov cocktail of well-read rock – a volatile brew of uneasy drama and emotion from a band that, on this showing, should always record live.

To partner the earnest and psych-gothic style in which Carey writes, Frog Eyes deliver the only noise acceptable: howling voices, waves of super-fuzz, swirling riffs that are always tantalisingly out of grasp and the wild guttural sound of Tom Waits, Scott Walker or The National when they still had a pair. ***Chris Parkin*** **8**

DOWNLOAD: 'Lear In Love'

ANDY WILLSHER

THE GOLDEN FILTER

VOLUSPA BRILLE



For the longest time, The Golden Filter were shrouded in more mystery than a Secret Service man's jock strap – strange considering the fact that their music couldn't possibly be more obvious. It's since transpired that the Aussie-American duo consist of Penelope Trappes (a honey-voiced diva) and Stephen Hindman (a knob-twiddling Moroder obsessive). Together, they make disco so sexy and sultry that it almost makes you sticky. It's a shame that 'Voluspa' rarely strays too far from that glitzy formula – only the ghostly, string-heavy ballad 'Nerida's Gone' really eases the four-on-the-floor fever – but you can't help but admire The Golden Filter for having one idea and running so far with it. ***Hardeep Phull*** **7**

DOWNLOAD: 'Thunderbird'

THE RIDER
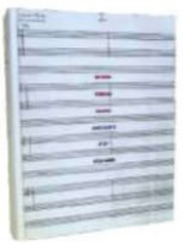
What we're reading, watching and scamming



Game

Super Street Fighter 4

An updated version of Capcom's hugely successful reboot of their classic fighting series. With new characters, better locations and improved gameplay, it certainly packs a punch.



Book

No Such Thing As Silence: John Cage's 4'33 by Kyle Gann

Gann explores Cage's controversial composition and its impact on American culture and contemporary music.



Gadget

Sony Bloggie

These super-cute HD video cameras can film 360 degrees, perfect for making your own music videos or messing around with mates. To nab one visit *NME.COM/win*

SINGLES

This week reviewed by **DARWIN DEEZ**



MARIACHI EL BRONX

HOLY WICHITA



Not really my kind of music. Ethnic music tends to involve chord progressions that are too familiar to be interesting to me personally. I'd rather listen to 'When The Water Gets Cold And Freezes On The Lake' by Herman Dune. David Herman Dune is the exception to the rule. He can really move me.

HOLLY MIRANDA

WAVES XL



I can't listen to music that's as sad as this Holly Miranda track because, well, I'll get sad. So I'm not digging it personally, although Miranda is a force. This reminds me of a sad day in the early '90s. But I won't go into that here.

ARIEL PINK'S HAUNTED GRAFFITI

ROUND AND ROUND 4AD



Tight to def. Go 'head Ariel Pink. Too unique. It's cool how his music sounds so surreal and so human and intimate at the same time. Plus I dig the '70s flavour hard. I wish I had some hipsters to share this with. We would talk about how the 'better production' (read: higher quality recording) allows us to hear the layers that were just lost on his older eight-track cassette recordings ("Yeah! Right?!"). I loved his Paw Tracks debut, 'The Doldrums'. I listened to that a lot.

IYAZ

SOLO TIME IS MONEY/BELUGA HEIGHTS/REPRISE



I've come to the conclusion that Iyaz's music is really not for me. I'd rather listen to 'Again', the original Janet Jackson song this borrows from. Gay house never sounded so awesome. Excellent 909 usage also [an '80s partial analog, partial sample-based drum machine built by Roland – Synth Muso Ed]. Note to Iyaz from Deez: good songwriting comes from a place in the soul if you dare to explore.

BIFFY CLYRO

BUBBLES 14TH FLOOR



Spiffy. I like Biffy Clyro. I really do. I want them to keep making music just like they do. Wonder what I can do to make sure they do? In fact, I should dig through their older stuff sometime. I get the feeling I'll probably like it.

THE NEAT

IN YOUTH IS PLEASURE CHEWING GUM



My first make-out was back when I was 16. I had an Afro and I met this creepy girl at a party. Well, I thought she was hot – she had a haircut like Spock and really pale skin – but my friends thought she was creepy. She was into this band called At The Drive-In, who were truly special. The awesomeness of their music extended into their Afros. This girl was really into that band – so much so that she took an interest in Afros as a result. Further down the chain of causality, we kissed. So, yeah, in youth is pleasure.

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LIVE

LIARS BRING IT ON HOME, ROLO TOMASSI GET FIERCE AND STORNOWAY PLAY, UH, STORNOWAY

Edited by Emily Mackay



ANDY WILLSHER

THE SETLIST

- Total Life Forever
- Cassius
- Olympic Airways
- Miami
- Balloons
- Blue Blood
- This Orient
- Spanish Sahara
- Red Socks Pugie
- Electric Bloom

(Encore)

- Instrumental
- The French Open
- Black Gold
- Two Steps, Twice

FOALS

THE COLUMBIA CLUB, BERLIN MONDAY, APRIL 12

In Germany, an intense Yannis and co thrive on spades of goodwill

A Berlin crowd won't move much. This is the warning an Englishman living in the German capital issues me 10 minutes before Foals take the stage. Berlin crowds are too polite, apparently – especially when it comes to live bands. DJs? Yeah, you'll get motion and energy then. Lots of it. You'll get hundreds of people losing their shit *en masse*, and naked men fisting themselves on the dancefloor of the city's infamous Panorama Bar. But bands? No movement. No *chance*.

Foals open with the title track of their new album 'Total Life Forever' and The Columbia Club starts to move. By the time 'Cassius' swings and stomps into earshot, shit is getting lost *everywhere*. 'Total Life Forever' may be a startling departure from their first album – its songs are more spacious, less guarded by bristling, acrobatic guitars – but it's also a logical departure, with evolution rather than revolution at its heart. Traces of 'Antidotes' cling to 'Total Life Forever' like soon-to-be-healed scabs, wounds earned through the breathless toil and intensity of Jack Bevan's drums and, again, those irresistible guitars, all three of which seem to have a familiar destination in mind even as they thrust and jut out in different directions.

> ***"We're not trying to erase our history"***
>
> YANNIS PHILIPPAKIS

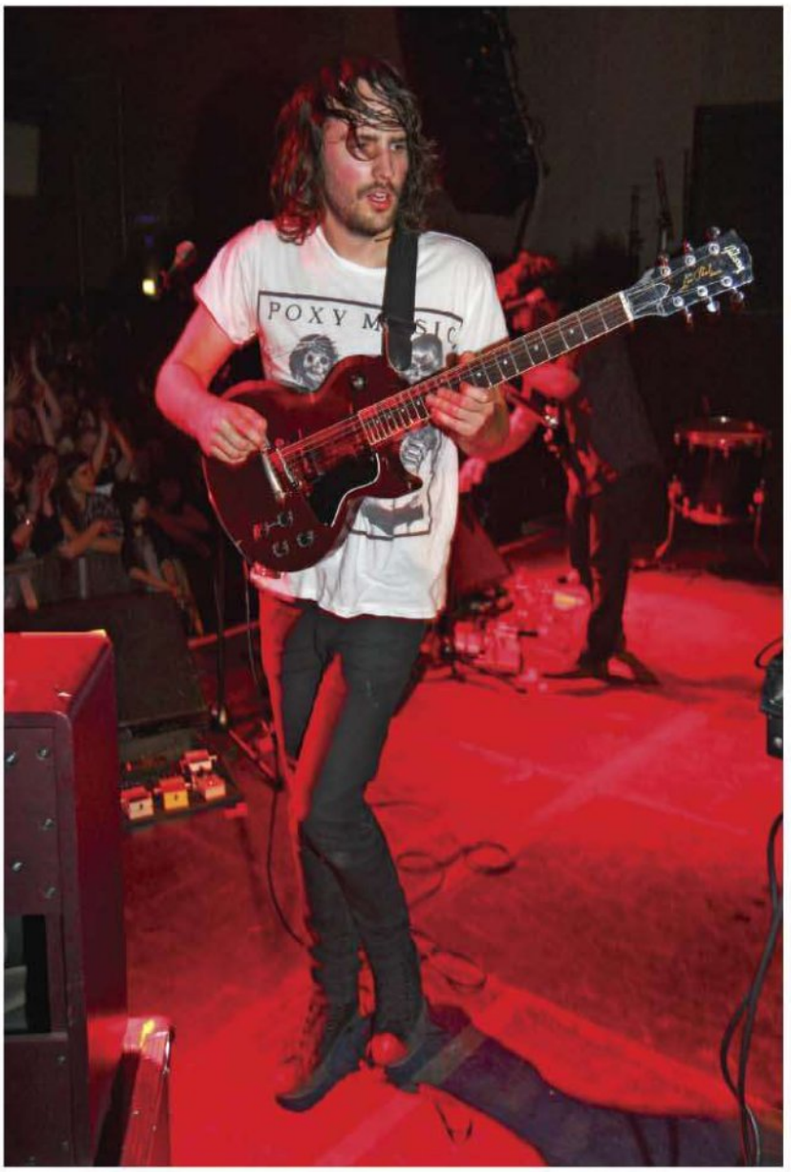
"I want our music to be one continuous piece of work," explains frontman Yannis Philippakis before tonight's show. "From the early singles, to 'Antidotes', to the B-sides, to the new record and hopefully beyond. We're not trying to erase our history – it really bothers me the way one band's records get pitted against each other."

Instead of erasing the past, the new tracks Foals play to this packed room tonight seem to remember 'Antidotes' vaguely and in snatches – the guitars that introduce 'Blue Blood', for example, glimmer and twitch as they have done before, but swap relentlessness for a more definite emotional punch. For all Yannis' desire to keep things "continuous", 'Blue Blood' jams a spanner the size of God into the works. Instead of sweeping the eager throng along – as a propulsive, ecstatic 'Balloons' had moments earlier – it rises before the audience to loom overhead like a gigantic totem. For a while the lack of flailing limbs is a mystery – you wonder if the crowd are bored or awed by this new development – but as the track ebbs to its end, the hush is broken by whistles and the

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sound of wet palms slapping together. Not bored, then. For a few moments, Foals become a thing to gawp at rather than a party band leading your dances. Is that a good thing?

"Last time we played here we'd been on tour with Friendly Fires for ages," recalls guitarist Jimmy Smith. "They were supposed to fire off these glitter cannons at the end of every show, but for whatever reason they hadn't done that. They let them all off here – they were this massive spectacle, and we... we didn't have any glitter cannons to hand, actually. We just played a really 'punk' set to compensate."

When Jimmy says 'punk' he clenches his fists into balls and holds them in that weight-lifter position under his chin, so I guess when he says 'punk' he means the '80s version of the word – he means toil, sweat, pain, passion (though keyboard player Edwin Congreave quips that the word "just means everything's out of tune").

What's great about hearing not exactly punky tracks like 'Blue Blood' and 'Spanish Sahara' tonight is that it feels like Foals have earned the right to a few moments of vulnerability and introspection; to a few minutes' *rest* given how hard 'Cassius', 'Balloons' and everything else on 'Antidotes' worked, musically-speaking.

Foals seem to be making a punk spectacle of themselves (though those two words won't sit easily together for the Situationists among you) – riddling their party clamour with show-stopping, lighter-goading moments of private drama that *can't* feel self-indulgent because their toil, 'til now, has been so unrelenting. When a pop song as sweet and as coy as new single 'This Orient' chimes in midway through proceedings tonight, it feels part of the same story as the more familiar 'Red Socks Pugie' and 'Electric Bloom'. Their past justifies their present; their present enriches their past.

Still, this being their second show since 'Total Life Forever' even began to exist, a few tweaks are needed before Foals can go hurtling on into their next present.

"The best shows are the ones where we forget we're playing," explains Yannis. "They're out-of-body experiences. It'll get to that point soon, but at the moment we're having to concentrate more."

Jack agrees, anticipating being able to 'forget' about playing the songs once they are committed to 'muscle memory'.

"That's when the devil possession happens," adds Yannis.

"At the moment we don't know where to put our attentions," admits bassist Walter Gervers. "On playing the new songs right, or enjoying the moment."

After 'Electric Bloom''s hissing wire fits have subsided, the band reappear for an encore featuring an exhilarating 'Two Steps, Twice' that sees a flying Yannis absorbed into the crowd. Reappearing, eventually, on the other side of the venue, he returns to knock some violent sense into a lonely floor tom before the band thank the fans and depart.

I catch up with Yannis later, waiting outside the venue for a fleet of taxis to deliver us to our next destination (The Columbia Club, by the way, is an old cinema with Art Deco touches).

"It was our first show back and Berlin crowds have a tendency to be slightly tentative... contemplative," says Yannis, correcting himself. "But it felt really good. There wasn't *too* big a disparity between old and new songs. There seemed a lot of goodwill in the room." And goodwill's all that Foals deserve.

Kev Kharas



(Clockwise from far left): The band in full thrash onstage at The Columbia Club; Edwin Congreave laconically lays down some one-finger synth lines; guitarist Jimmy Smith gets sweaty; the band relax backstage; Yannis Philippakis mounts a speakerstack

BIG MOUTH

The noise from the crowd



Anna, Stuttgart

What did you think of the show?

"It was really great! The new songs were very different, but they fit very well alongside the older ones in the setlist. I travelled 700km and six hours in the car for Foals! I had a great night. I'm glad I came, for sure."

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LIARS

EL REY THEATRE, LOS ANGELES

FRIDAY, APRIL 12

Intense, extravagant and oh so abrasive, the perfect tribute to the City Of Angels

Los Angeles. The opening night of the Liars tour for their album 'Sisterworld', a record that conceives of an alternate world that's an escape from the violence and falseness of this very city. Already the band and audience are feasting upon each other with thrash-panic anthems. There's a handlebar moustache to the left of us, an Afro to the right, a Mclusky T-shirt in front, and they're all giddily bashing their heads about as Angus Andrew roars, "*Why'd you shoot the man with the gun? 'COS HE BOTHERED YOU!*" Ah, just another moment of gleeful dread in the sprawl that Liars once again call home. A city that they claim is more dark and dangerous than it seems...

After a decade of gigs, through all their progressions from chorus art-rock to witchcraft chanting to drums of death, tonight Liars are bringing it all together. They're at their most intense and their most abrasive but also their most tuneful – because something that's rarely been discussed through that 10 years of reinvention is the singing. Something in the voice of Angus Andrew has changed. Textures have grown there. You notice it on 'Scissor', where he sounds all aged-in-a-barrel, like his countryman Nick Cave, but then he lets it float up, up, into the helium strata of Thom Yorke on 'Sailing To Byzantium', like he's only using the skeleton of his voice, not weighed down by the flesh. But then it's back to the roaring, and the doomy bang bang throw-yourself-off-a-cliff, funny sort of apocalypse that is Liars. Every meaningless lyric becomes completely meaningful as Angus barks and growls and pogos.

Tonight, there's no shtick. They don't climb on top of the speakers, or devote the show solely to drums, or wear big fur coats or matching white bodysuits. (though any lawyers representing Dougal from *The Magic Roundabout* might want to have a word with Angus about the theft of a hairstyle). Only by the encore has the intensity dissipated a little, the extra two members having left the original threesome onstage, with Angus to be found rolling around a beer bottle, doing impressions of a cat.

Then it's all over, fans streaming happily out to their cars, past the bus stop that contains a homeless guy and no buses. His wheelchair sits beside him with all his worldly goods inside it, while he's slumped asleep, his head hanging over the space where his legs used to be. Just another Los Angeles moment. ***Sophie Heawood***

BIG MOUTH

The noise from the crowd



Danny Gabai, 28, Silverlake, LA

So, how was it?

"I've seen Liars six times and every time has been different, but tonight was so intense it was like thrash metal. They burst out with so much energy, hitting you like a guttural punch."

JON WEINBERG, HEIKE SCHNEIDER

THE UNIVERSE IS SINGING YOU A SONG

Or strange poetry to be found in the gig listings this week

Little Teeth Forum, Tunbridge Wells

Chew Lips Stiff Kitten, Belfast

Ingested Joiners, Southampton

The Blueberries Dublin Castle, London

Always Read The Label Nice N Sleazy, Glasgow

Feed Me Hoagy's Bar, Leeds

The Goodness Louisiana, Bristol

Your Mama's Cookin Ruby Lounge, Manchester

WHAT'S ON YOUR RIDER?



Laura Marling, Lowry, Manchester

- 24 x still water
- 1 x bottle of whiskey
- 4 x regular cola
- 3 x bottle good quality red wine
- 24 x bottle of beer
- Fruit juices
- Nuts, dried fruit and fresh fruit
- 1 x vegetarian meal

LED ER EST/XENO AND OAKLANDER

BARDENS BOUDOIR, LONDON TUESDAY, APRIL 13

Somebody has Blu-Tacked a magazine cut-out of the cover of New Order's 1983 album 'Power, Corruption And Lies' to the wall behind the stage. Perhaps it's to taunt these two outfits from New York's Wierd Records, home to all that is synth and stern. It warns that to better what was done 30 years ago is a difficult task. At first, the most shocking thing about Led Er Est is just how un-goth they look, despite sounding like Bauhaus gone 8-bit. But their curious set crushes neo-psychedelic hum beneath steadying synthesizer: lo-fi, in the sense that it fills the gaps with fuzz where their '80s forebears stripped everything out. If synth hymns ancient and modern can be too austere, and contemporary Yank psychedelia overly warm, then Led Er Est strike a balance between the two – after all, the tepid bath is an underrated challenge.

Boy/girl duo Xeno And Oaklander might have a name that suggests an alliance between Japanese and American automobile manufacturers in this time of recession, but their dashboard has a more retro trim. Indeed, a track like 'Shadow World' could have fitted on Angular and Wierd's recent cold wave retrospective compilation without you noticing that decades had past. Nevertheless, like LEE there's a sense of the playful here making it a few thousand miles and years distant from the drizzly melancholia of those still-life flowers stuck, crumpled, on that wall. ***Luke Turner***

MELISSA AUF DER MAUR

WHITE TRASH FAST FOOD, BERLIN SAT, APRIL 10

She rose to eminence bass-jousting in Hole and Smashing Pumpkins but, having stayed clear of both her former band's reunions, Melissa Auf Der Maur is tonight unapologetically touting her long-awaited second solo album 'Out Of Our Minds'. If Courtney's got a higher press profile for her own comeback, Melissa's certainly managed to retain her cult following; despite the gig's short notice, White Trash Fast Food is rammed to the rafters. New tracks 'Isis Speaks' and 'Lead Horse' shimmer with a passionate intensity, while the primal wailing which kicks off the best song from previous album 'Auf De Maur', 'Followed The Waves', and the new record's title track is chillingly intense. In the wrong hands such vocal acrobatics would sound like Adam Ant gone insane – with Melissa, however, it's epically cathartic. With performances like this, you have to be glad that Courtney and Billy's egos no longer require her services. ***Mark Fernyhough***



YOUR TWENTIES

02 ACADEMY, BRISTOL MONDAY, MARCH 12

It's a very meagre throng that assembles for the opening night of Your Twenties' tour, and a meek one at that. There will be no crowdsurfing, brawling or hurling of skull-cracking bottles this evening. In spite of this though, the London four-piece could really do with a paramedic on the scene to prepare for the inevitable moment when their startlingly chiselled frontman Gabriel Stebbing over-pouts and postures his way to a hernia. Formerly of Metronomy, he struts as though he were mainlining Jarvis – that deliciously spindly, British strain of camp, complete with knacker-pinchingly high falsetto. It's trooping the colour on excellent single 'Billionaires', which channels Of Montreal warring with Hall & Oates. They're mousetrap quick and gawky on 'Sugar The Pill', before the aptly titled 'Euphoria' makes like Everything Everything strung out on sedatives. A change of mood is something Your Twenties would do well to practise though. Their set charges at a breathless four-to-the-floor stampede, meaning that by the time 'Every Night' appears, déjà vu's set in. Luckily, theirs is the kind of charm you won't mind living through more than once. ***Laura Snapes***

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XIU XIU/TUNE-YARDS/ ZOLA JESUS/TWIN SISTER

BOWERY BALLROOM, NEW YORK FRIDAY, APRIL 9

Brilliantly eclectic bill offers all manner of playful treats and brutal hyperreality

Ask any nightlife-savvy New Yorker which is the best music venue in the five boroughs, and they'll reply "Bowery Ballroom" before you even draw breath. Why? Because amongst other reasons, outstandingly eclectic line-ups like this are the norm here.

Tonight's openers **Twin Sister** are the latest hot tip to emerge from the city. Accordingly, the place is rammed with tastemakers and A&R types from the get-go to see these five C86 disciples deliver a lustrous, but occasionally vapid form of dream-pop. **Zola Jesus**, meanwhile, send the evening into darker realms with their über-melodramatic goth. Flanked by two black-clad synth pounders, mainwoman Nika Roza Danilova sounds like Florence Welch if she'd grown up necking barbiturates while listening to mid-'80s Depeche Mode. Gifted though she is vocally, their set feels stuck in one monochromatic gear – even though it lasts barely 25 minutes.

In a glossy Gaga era, Xiu Xiu are even more real than you could imagine

So far, so so, but the bill's main draws impress massively, in almost completely opposite ways. Already a cult figure on the American lo-fi scene, Merrill Garbus of **Tune-Yards** is a one-woman show like no other. Armed with just drums, ukulele and a fantastically uncontrolled, yodelling voice, she samples and loops herself to create mini-symphonies of tribal Afrobeat rhythms and joyous folk melodies. Seeing her create moments of baroque-pop magic like 'Hatari' or the catchy 'Gangsta' are lessons in songwriting craft and musical resourcefulness. At least three of the songs feature loops of her hitting the mic stand with a drumstick. Beat that, Pro-Tools!

Tune-Yards' playfulness is in very stark contrast to **Xiu Xiu**'s brutal headline act. Mainman Jamie Stewart's reputation as a troubled soul precedes him, but you don't need any prior knowledge of those personal demons to pick up on the harrowing feel of opener 'Black Drum Machine'. It's a terrifying use of the quiet/LOUD trick; guitar notes and vocal howls give way to industrial rhythm and power (added courtesy of Angela Seo). It's effective enough that a grimacing few call it a night before the song's even finished.

It's clear from the start, Stewart is only there for him, muttering a sole hello. Hard as the music is to listen to, it certainly is riveting to see him go through this intense catharsis onstage. As his body jerks in spasms and a lifetime of trauma protrudes from his voice, the likes of 'Gray Death' and 'Muppet Face' sound like crude splicings of early Nine Inch Nails songs and the most feral Sonic Youth noise interludes. Even the more jocular-sounding 'Chocolate Makes You Happy' (the poppiest moment of the night) hides a tale of eating disorders and more self-loathing. There's a savage feel to it all, but the one thing you don't have to worry about when watching this guy is whether it's pretence or for real. The fact is that in this era of glossy, Gaga-esque artifice, Xiu Xiu are even more real than you could ever imagine was still possible. ***Hardeep Phull***



ROLO TOMASSI

O2 ACADEMY OXFORD SATURDAY, APRIL 10

Wild'n'unhinged, the rule-flouting metallers delight and confuse with their new sound

As intriguing as Diplo's production of the Yorkshire terriers' second album looks on paper there's still only one way to experience Rolo Tomassi: at one of their bat-shit crazy live shows. Typically, for wild young things making strides on a second effort it's said the big-name production of 'Cosmology' means a more "cohesive sound". Booooring! It's not. It's the incongruity of their songs – yappy little buggers that dart off in different directions when you try to put a leash on them – that marks them out.

Hitting the stage like a well-behaved headline act, bathed in blue light and opening with a B-side ('The Golden Ghost') that chugs like a nu metal cast-off and limps weakly after the puke-flecked fury of support bands Throats and Trash Talk, we're initially a little concerned Rolo have been neutered. But it takes three songs and the squiggle-riff intro to 'Abraxas', from 2008's 'Hysterics', for the young band to unfurl a sophisticated brand of punk-metal lunacy that more than makes up for a lack of amped-up wallop.

If it's not enough that Eva Spence yelps and roars from the deepest bowels of hell and then sings sweetly on epic highlight 'Kasia', writhing like a snake as she goes, then the band's blizzard of time signatures, bleepy synth and guitar wig-outs recall the delicious absurdity of Mike Patton's Mr Bungle. It's a marked improvement on a recorded sound that's often as uniform as the whir of an electric toothbrush.

Sounding like a petting zoo full of snarling animals, Eva caws and barks as she brilliantly helms the sultry, brass-laden march of their lounge-screamo innovation 'Unromance' and later displays an innate sense of timing on the choppy, MC Escher-like angularity of 'French Motel'. As these new songs unfold so Rolo Tomassi get odder and odder – even those tricksy Foals are seen in the crowd nodding their approval. If Rolo have a modus operandi, it's never playing by the rules, even your own. ***Chris Parkin***

The Setlist

- The Golden Ghost
- Fofteen
- Abraxas
- Unromance
- An Apology To The Universe
- Nine
- Scabs
- Kasia
- Sakia
- Jealous Bones
- French Motel
- Party Wounds
- Oh, Hello Ghost
- I Love Turbulence

***To win a Rolo Tomassi T-shirt, signed CD and a pair of tickets for their May 28 show at London's Underworld, go to* NME.COM/win**

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ANDY WILLSHER, BEN ROWLAND

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On The Road With STORNOWAY

The UK's buzziest new folk band win the hearts of the Scottish island town they're named after – but will the locals let them leave?



JOHN BULLOCK

WOODLANDS CENTRE, STORNOWAY

Friday, April 9

It's just gone quarter past 11 and Stornoway (the Oxford band) are in Stornoway (the tiny town on the Isle Of Lewis, Scotland), revelling in the completion of an epic pilgrimage.

"We thought there would be a magnetic vortex preventing us meeting Stornoway," announces singer Brian Briggs, halfway through a triumphant set, to a crowd of locals, industry and mates from Oxfordshire. "Maybe it will work the other way and we won't be able to leave."

Brian's comment is to prove weirdly prescient... but more of that later. When we first meet the UK's most-hyped new folk band beneath the expansive Outer Hebridean sky, they've just returned from a tour of the Harris Tweed factory and are still nursing hangovers from last night in Inverness. Rob Steadman – drummer and youngest member of the band – is being coy about last night's debauchery. "Have you heard how he shagged two girls last night?" says his brother and bassist Ollie Steadman, pointing at his brother with a huge grin on his face. "Hey!" shouts Rob in return. "I was just chatting to them, alright?"

Rob (19) is still a loud, easily excitable child at heart. His brother Ollie (22) is his polar opposite. Constantly aloof, with a hint of Alex James about him (not least in the way he flicks his hair provocatively and pouts when playing his bass), he's currently revising for his Chemistry finals at Warwick University – and spends most of his free time with his nose deep in his green university folder.

"Yeah, alright, I met these really nice French girls last night," Rob eventually admits. "One of them taught Mancunians English..."

"She said mine was excellent," quips Jon Ouin – guitarist, keyboardist and brains of the outfit – and the band erupt into fits of laughter.

Jon Ouin is fluent in Russian, and looks like a hybrid of Brain from the cartoon series *Pinky And The Brain* and Mr Bean. Jon and Brian are the creative duo in the band and their mature years – 29 and 30, respectively – counterbalance the boyish exuberance of the two Steadman brothers. Together they write love songs steeped in nautical imagery and sound. As the band soundcheck for tonight's gig in the Woodland Centre - a café-cum-venue shaped like a Viking longship – Brian explains to us where he finds his inspiration: "All our songs are about my girlfriend, really. We're getting married in May."

As they start their set with new single 'I Saw You Blink', the crowd cheer every lyric. They play a mix of plugged-in tracks and acoustic re-workings, which work perfectly in this oddly maritime setting. 'The Coldharbour Road' sounds like ocean waves crashing against the soul and 'We Are Battery Human' becomes a full-on fisherman's sea shanty. Before set-closer 'Zorbing', the band hand out drams of whisky to the crowd. It's a clever move, as the audience reaction to last year's most unorthodox love song is of pure genuine elation. Alcoholic bribes or not, it seems the locals are now more than happy to allow "posh cunts" from Oxford to use their name. Tonight has become a double celebration for one of the UK's buzziest folk acts, as they officially sign with revered indie 4AD. Alongside the label's head of A&R Ed Horrox, the band pen the contract deep in the woods and the champagne is cracked open.

Celebrations continue on to Stornoway's only nightclub, Era. It's the craziest place we have ever stepped foot in; we see four fights and people are slouched in every corner. Jon unknowingly helps break up a scrap: "Two men arguing stopped to say, 'Check that cunt's red trousers.'"

Everyone gets totally trashed and ends the night playing hacky-sack with a tiny ball on a deserted dancefloor.

STRANDED IN STORNOWAY

Saturday, April 10

In the morning we set off in the splitter van around the island, to shake off our self-inflicted illness. The band watch *The Wicker Man* – the obvious DVD of choice for this section of the tour – as the barren landscape flashes past the window. We head to port around 2pm to catch our ferry back to the Scottish mainland and the band's next date, a free gig in Ullapool. But Stornoway will not let its new favourite namesakes go that easily. The tannoy announces: "There is a problem with the engine and there will be a delay in this service. We now plan to sail tomorrow at 7am."

"Shit, this is all getting a bit like *The Wicker Man*," shouts Rob. It soon becomes clear we won't be leaving the island tonight. The band's manager tries desperately to rustle up a speedboat to take us to the mainland, but Stornoway are forced to cut their losses and play some more hacky-sack. After a few hours of kicking a small bag of sand to each other we decide a better course of action is to fill the van up with booze and find a quiet spot. Soon we discover an idyllic, isolated beach where the band sit and drink single malt whisky and smoke weed until the sun melts behind the blue mountains on the horizon. Far from distraught at missing the gig, Stornoway revel in this unforeseen chance to make themselves at home. Brian later tells us this was his favourite moment of the tour.

THE CEILIDH PLACE, ULLAPOOL/SNAFU, ABERDEEN

Sunday, April 11

We finally set sail towards Ullapool at the ungodly hour of 7am. To make up for standing up the locals the previous night, the band play an acoustic set outside a quaint café in this gorgeous small Highland town at 11am. It's a beautiful moment. 'Fuel Up' sounds clearer in the fine spring air and 'Long Distance Lullaby' tugs at every emotional fibre in the body. They finish their set with 'End Of The Movie', a song so touching some of the locals start weeping into their breakfast porridge.

Their fleeting romance with the Highlands drawing to a close, the band say their fond farewells and we head off to Aberdeen. Compared to rural joys of earlier in the day, their gig in the Granite City feels like a bit of an anti-climax. Maybe it's because a full electric set feels like a waste of tracks like 'Boats And Trains', which should forever be played unplugged. Maybe it's just tiredness from the excess of previous days. Or maybe Stornoway (the town) exerted more of a mysterious pull on Stornoway (the band) than they thought. "I'll settle for the latter," concludes Brian.

Jamie Crossan

View From The Top



Ed Horrox, Head of A&R, 4AD

"That gig shows why I signed that band. It was fantastic, although I am biased. I'm glad people up here appreciate their music as much as I do. They just make beautiful songs with amazing lyrics."

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Saturday, 12noon, Stornoway
"Um, so where exactly are we?"



Friday, 2pm, Harris Tweed Factory, Isle Of Lewis
Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee, the Steadman brothers admire the thread



Friday, 11.45pm, Woodlands Centre, Stornoway
Brian and Jon bribe the audience with free whisky



Friday, 11pm, Woodlands Centre, Stornoway
While Brian sings, Jon works out his next cunning plan for world domination



Friday, 12.15pm, Woodlands Centre, Stornoway
"Anyone for a spot of champagne?" The band sign their recording contract with Ed Horrox in the woods



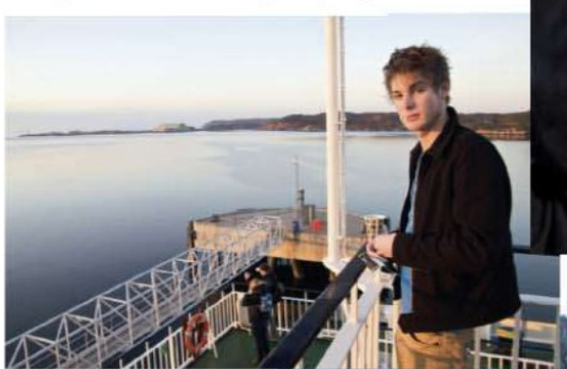
Friday, 3pm, outside Era nightclub, Stornoway
NME, Rob and support Rachael Sermanni after grooving to Gaga



Saturday, 3pm, Ferry Port, Stornoway
When all is lost, why not play some hacky-sack?



Saturday, 4pm, Ferry Port, Stornoway
"Right, how the hell do we get off this bloody island?"



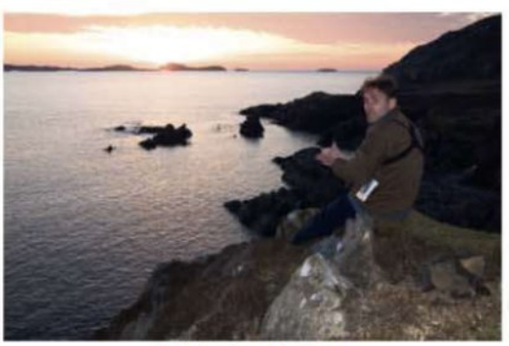
Sunday, 7pm, on the ferry
Rob enjoys the view with coffee and a cigarette



Sunday, 11pm, The Ceilidh Place, Ullapool
Finally the band make it to play a free gig in the glorious Highland sunshine



Saturday, 2pm, Ferry Port, Stornoway
On a road to nowhere. The band get news that the ferry isn't sailing until the following morning



Saturday, 8pm, Isle Of Lewis
Brian admires the stunning views as he starts to forget he is supposed to be playing in Ullapool

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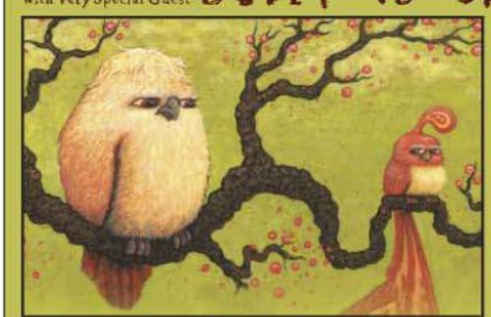
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BAND AID

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SCAREDY CAT

I suffer from chronic stage fright and I always end up ballsing things up onstage. What should I do?
Quaking In My Boots, Leicester

Lots of famous rock stars suffer from stage fright, Quaking. They say that the easiest way to combat stage fright is to imagine the audience naked, but that gets quite difficult when you progress to larger arenas. Instead, simply pick out one member of the audience and imagine them naked, strapped to a cold metal table, shivering and alone, strange tubes snaking in and out of their torso. Just be careful you don't get an erection, as happens to me sometimes. ***Uncle Pete***

ANY REPLACEMENTS?

One of our band members is leaving. What is the easiest and quickest way to find a replacement? Do you suggest ads and auditions?
One Man Down, Watford

You disappoint me, OMD. The truly rock'n'roll – nay, the *only* thing to do is to place your band in the hands of fate. Let your member leave. Then go to your rehearsal space and wait. And then, eventually, your new member will come to you. Fear not. They WILL find you, the power of rock WILL find a way to deliver them unto you. And if that doesn't work, then yeah, I suppose ads and auditions could work too. ***Uncle Pete***

TUMBLEWEED!

We fucked up onstage. Badly. It was the worst tumbleweed moment of our lives, at quite a significant gig. How are we supposed to redeem ourselves from such humiliation?
Died On Our Arse, Brighton

Not so long back a young beat combo came to me with just such a tale of onstage humiliation and, as I said to them, I say to you now: "Use the humiliation as fuel to ensure it never happens again. And if it DOES, take out your penis and wave it at the crowd." As a result of my advice, Mumford And Sons are never allowed to return to Tunbridge Wells Forum, ever again. ***Uncle Pete***

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So you want to get working in the music industry? Fancy yourselves as the next Radar stars or the production genius behind 2011's Ellie Goulding? Well the best way to give yourselves a leg up and a chance to be in the NME of tomorrow is to take some formal training.

Of course it's hard to have the opportunity to dedicate all your time and energies to developing your musical skills, whether as an artist or someone who wants to work in the business. College, partying and sometimes just life can get in the way. These courses might help.

Access To Music is the UK's leading designer and provider of popular music education and training, with music centres in many towns and cities across the country. They offer a range of FE courses which have free tuition for 16-18s, including Performing Musician, Performing Musician (Vocal Artist), Session Musician, Digital Musician and Audio Production Engineer. They also offer a Freelance Music Apprenticeship for 16-30s and HE courses in London.

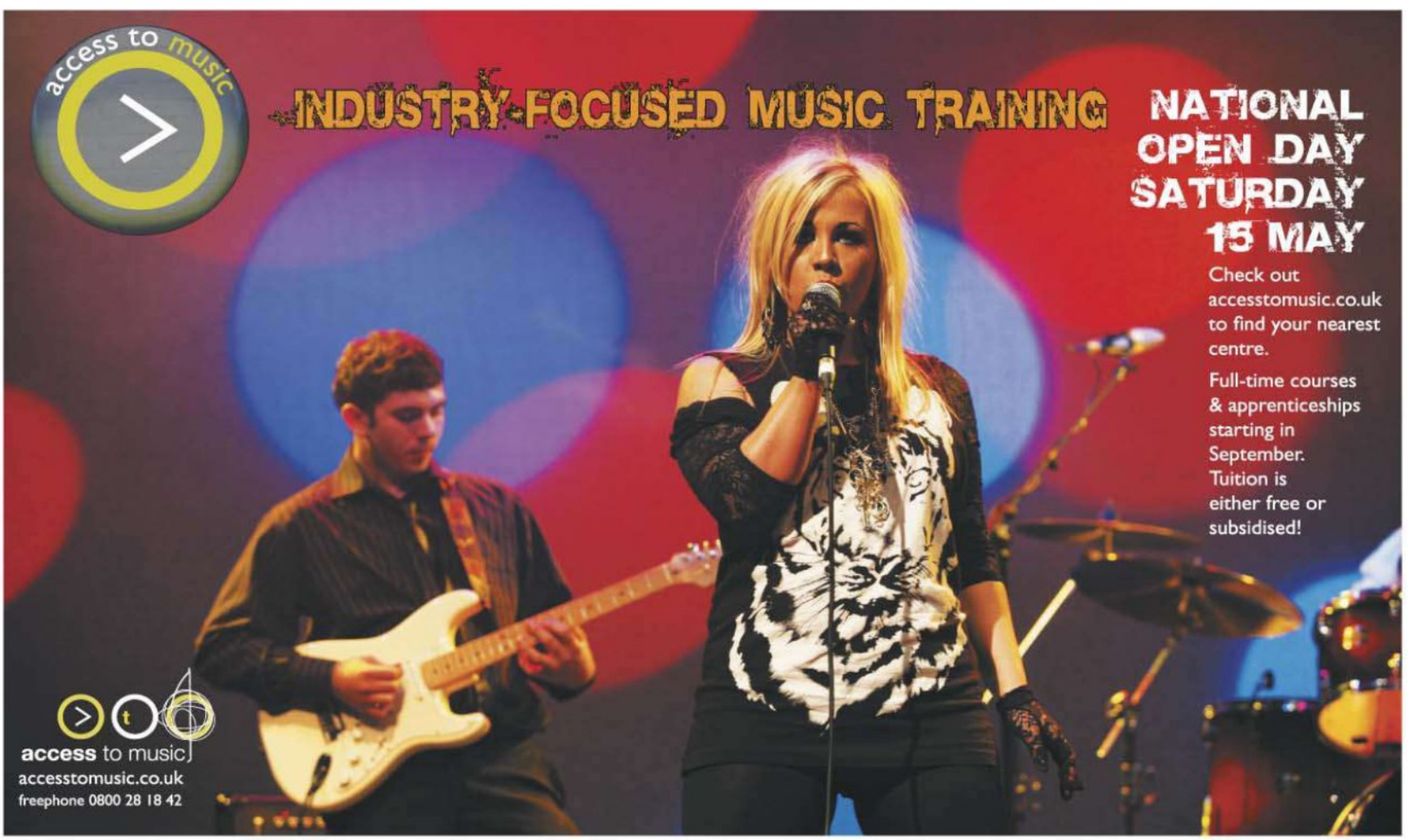
BIMM is a college run by musicians for musicians, with a strong emphasis on live music and playing instruments well. They have produced the likes of The Kooks, Beth Rowley and Kate Walsh and take a unique approach towards training individuals for a musical career or
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Berkleemusic is the online continuing education division of Berklee College of Music, whose previous students include John Mayer and Quincy Jones. With their online courses you can study what you want, when you want, and where you want. They have online tutorials, as well as arranging weekly group discussions for courses and you'll study under professionals with years of industry experience.

And on top of all this **The Academy of Music and Sound** are the driving machine behind such talent as Newton Faulkner and Amelle Berrabah. Their celebrity masterclasses are a vital part of their courses and feature some legendary artists from all disciplines, including most recently Paloma Faith.

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GIG GUIDE

THE UK'S BIGGEST GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Ash Dosanjh

BOOKING NOW



OFFSET FESTIVAL

STARTS: London Hainault Forest Country Park, September 4

DON'T MISS

This two-day shindig is one of the very few post-summer festivals that can lay claim to being a majestic melting pot of the old and new. Having already hosted bands such as Gang Of Four, The Horrors, Wire, The Maccabees, The xx and Wild Beasts, this year sees Offset enter into its third year. With acts such as Liquid Liquid, Telepathe, Charles De Goal, Kap Bambino, Bo Ningen, O Children, Cluster, These New Puritans and Male Bonding already confirmed for the 160-band line-up, rest assured that things in the idyllic setting of Hainault Park are about to get interesting.
NME.COM/festivals



THE SLITS

STARTS: Dublin Crawdaddy Club, May 6

The '70s punk outfit fronted by Ari Up head out on the road to tour last year's 'Trapped Animal' LP.
NME.COM/artists/the-slits



MIDLAKE

STARTS: Academy Liverpool, June 28

Putting on a brave face, Texan rockers Midlake head to the UK with new album 'The Courage Of Others'.
NME.COM/artists/midlake



TRUCK FESTIVAL

STARTS: Steventon Hill Top Farm, July 23

The annual indie fest with a food stall run by the local Rotary Club features Esben & The Witch.
NME.COM/festivals



THE KOOKS

STARTS: O2 Academy Leeds, June 4

Band making their way back from the 'where are they now?' bargain bin.
NME.COM/artists/the-kooks



GOLDHEART ASSEMBLY

STARTS: Liverpool Bumper, May 20

The alt.rock ensemble tour their debut record 'Wolves And Thieves'.
NME.COM/artists/goldheart-assembly



MGMT

STARTS: Dublin Olympia, September 16

Worthy of a pat on the back, Ben Goldwasser and Andrew VanWyngarden tour new album 'Congratulations'.
NME.COM/artists/mgmt



BONNIE 'PRINCE' BILLY

STARTS: Belfast Empire, July 27

The master of folk takes to the road with collaborators The Cairo Gang.
NME.COM/artists/bonnie-prince-billy



LIARS

STARTS: London O2 Shepherds Bush Empire, May 27

Following the release of album number five 'Sisterworld', the US-based outfit head to the UK.
NME.COM/artists/liars



LATITUDE FESTIVAL

STARTS: Suffolk Henham Park, July 15

Belle & Sebastian, Florence + The Machine and Vampire Weekend (pictured) headline the hugely popular family-friendly three-day event this year.
NME.COM/festivals



DUM DUM GIRLS

STARTS: London Luminaire, May 13

Following the recent release of their critically acclaimed dreampop debut 'I Will Be', the Iggy Pop-referencing four-piece head over to Blighty.
NME.COM/artists/dum-dum-girls



PEARL JAM

STARTS: London Hyde Park, June 25

The grunge stalwarts that lived to tell the tale play their biggest-ever London date this summer, as part of the annual Hyde Park Calling event.
NME.COM/artists/pearl-jam



PHOSPHORESCENT

STARTS: London ICA, June 2

Ahead of a handful of appearances at this summer's festivals indie folkster Matthew Houck and his cohorts play a show in the UK capital.
NME.COM/artists/Phosphorescent

GETTY, RICHARD JOHNSON, JO MCCAUGHEY, PIETER M VAN HATTEM, EMILIE BAILEY

Liars are playing O2 Shepherds Bush Empire. O2 customers get Priority Tickets to O2 Shepherds Bush Empire up to 48 hours before general release.
When Priority Tickets are gone, they're gone. Terms apply. Just register at o2priority.co.uk
O2

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PICK *of the* WEEK

What to see this week? Let us help



THE FALL

STARTS: EDINBURGH STUDIO 24, SATURDAY

NME PICK

At recent Fall gigs crowds would have been treated to the sight of Mark E Smith barking his lyrics from a wheelchair. Now back to full fighting fitness, and with the brilliant new album 'Your Future Our Clutter' (reviewed on p34) one of the best records you're going to hear all year, Smith takes his wife Elena and the Fall blokes on a jaunt around the UK. Just don't stand there bellowing for some obscure 1984 B-side. For a while The Fall were an unpredictable live quantity, gigs on more than one occasion descending into fights; these days an encounter with the legends is to be given a fleeting, raucous glimpse into their strange world.

NME.COM/artists/the-fall



Everyone's Talking About
THE FUTUREHEADS

STARTS: Norwich Arts Centre (Mon)

The Sunderland four-piece may have been dropped by their label back in 2006 but they've been cultivating a cult status and occupying pride of place in our record collections ever since. The band are touring in support of their forthcoming fourth album 'The Chaos'.

NME.COM/artists/the-futureheads



Don't Miss
MARK LANEGAN

STARTS: Bristol O2 Academy 2 (Fri)

The former Screaming Trees frontman ditches The Gutter Twins and collaborations with electro-rock outfit Soul Savers and the delectable dulcet tones of Isobel Campbell to go it alone. A luminary in the American grunge-rock scene, Lanegan's dulled-soul vocals will leave you in a state of wonder.

NME.COM/newmusic



Radar Stars
HURTS

STARTS: Glasgow King Tut's Wah Wah Hut (Mon)

Kickstarting the NME Radar Tour 2010 are joint headliners Hurts and Everything Everything. With past acts including La Roux, Maximo Park, Friendly Fires and Crystal Castles, this year's tour has a lot to live up to. But, with support coming from Darwin Deez, each night is surely gonna get off to an awesome start.

NME.COM/artists/hurts

GIG GUIDE KEY:

+14 = 14 AND ABOVE +16 = 16 AND ABOVE AA = ALL AGES CS = CLUB SHOW
FR = FREE ENTRY WA = UNDER 14S WITH AN ADULT
UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED ALL GIGS ARE 18+

JAMES QUINTON, SONIA MELOT, TOM OXLEY, EMILIE BAILEY, TOM MARTIN, TIM COCHRANE

WEDNESDAY

April 21

ABERDEEN
Candi Staton Warehouse 0844 847 2319

BATH
Adelaide's Cape Moles 01225 404445

BELFAST
Scouting For Girls Queen's University 028 9024 5133

BIRMINGHAM
Belladonna/Ghost In Mirrors Asylum 0121 233 1109
Oh Sleeper O2 Academy 3 0870 771 2000 WA
Shakespears Sister O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

BRIGHTON
Bolide Awkwardsta Hector's House 01273 681228

BRISTOL
The Bluetones Thekla 08713 100000
Fuck Buttons Trinity 01179 351 200
Laura Marling Colston Hall 0117 922 3683
Reef O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA

CAMBRIDGE
Spark Portland Arms 01223 357268

CARDIFF
Brigade Barfly 029 2066 7658

CHELMSFORD
Gaoler's Daughter/Thieves Of Time Barhouse 01245 356811

CORK
Blood Red Shoes Cyprus Avenue 00 35321 427 6165
Dropkick Murphys Savoy 00 35321 425 3000

DUBLIN
Bob Schneider Whelan's (Upstairs) 00 3531 475 9372
LCD Soundsystem Tripod 00 353 1 4780225
The Vagabonds Crawdaddy 00 3531 478 0225

DUNDEE
The Foxes Dexters 01382 228894

EDINBURGH
Gil Scott-Heron Picture House 0844 847 1740

EXETER
This City Cavern Club 01392 495370

GLASGOW
Chain And The Gang Stereo 0141 576 5018
The Features King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
Joe Carnall & The Book Club/Black Velveteens/The Cairos/Vendor Defender Captain's Rest 0141 331 2722
The Wonderstuff O2 ABC 0870 903 3444 WA
Yeah Detroit 13th Note Café 0141 553 1638

GUILDFORD
Dirty Cuts Boileroom 01483 440022

LEAMINGTON SPA
Black Rebel Motorcycle Club The Assembly 01926 313774

LEEDS
The Duke And The King Hi-Fi Club 0113 242 7353
Ef Joseph's Well 0113 203 1861
Gentleman's Dub Club Stylus 01132 431751
Hannah Trigwell Wardrobe 0113 222 3434
Joshua Radin Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866
The Red Chord Rios 0844 414 2182
Wilful Missing Milo 0113 245 7101

LONDON
Alasdair Roberts Café Oto 0871 230 1094
Alight Barfly 0870 907 0999
Marina Gasolina/Zoo Zero Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191
Audio Bullys Scala 020 7833 2022
Cosmo Jarvis The Lexington 020 7837 5387
The Crookes Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478
The Deccas Arts Club 020 7460 4459
The Depreciation Guild Windmill 020 8671 0700
Efterklang O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000 WA
Emmanuella Grace Cobden Club 020 8960 4222
Eran's Burning Love Band 229 Club 020 7631 8310
Good Shoes Dingwalls 020 7267 1577
Grant-Lee Phillips Bush Hall 020 8222 6955
Hold Fast Hope/Goliath/ Turnpike Glow Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358
Idlewild Forum 020 7344 0044
The Inspector Cluzo O2 Academy 2 Islington 0870 771 2000 WA
Kris Drever Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080
My Preserver Borderline 020 7734 5547
Nottee/Penguin Prison/Dekade Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709
Paul Weller Garage 020 7607 1818
Powderfinger O2 Academy Brixton 0870 771 2000 WA
The Strange Boys ICA 020 7930 3647
The Union O2 Academy Islington 0870 771 2000 WA
Violet Violet 100 Club 020 7636 0933
Wanda Jackson/Imelda May Luminaire 020 7372 7123

MANCHESTER
Angus & Julia Stone Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392
Karma To Burn Academy 3 0161 832 1111

NEWCASTLE
The Lodger/Education, Education, Education/Black Cab Casino Northumberland Arms 0191 232 6048
The Quireboys O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA

NORWICH
Ash Waterfront 01603 632717
Shy Child Arts Centre 01603 660352

NOTTINGHAM
Chew Lips Bodega Social Club 08713 100000
Gyratory System/Muchuu Spanky Van Dyke 0115 924 3730

PORTSMOUTH
Renegades Wedgewood Rooms 023 9286 3911

PRESTON
Show Of Hands 53 Degrees 01772 893 000

READING
Wild Palms Oakford Social Club 0116 255 3956

ST ALBANS
The Sideliners Horn 01727 853143

YORK
The Primitives Fibbers 01904 651 250
Sonic Boom Six The Duchess 01904 641 413



Good Shoes, Dingwalls, London

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THURSDAY
April 22


Kate Nash, Village Underground, London

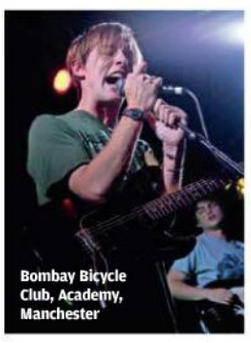
ABERDEEN
The Foxes The Tunnels 01224 211121
Gil Scott-Heron Warehouse 0844 847 2319
BATH
Thomas Tantrum Moles 01225 404445
BELFAST
Brandi Carlile Spring & Airbrake 028 9032 5968
BRECON
Levellers Theatr Brycheiniog 01874 611622
BRIGHTON
Good Shoes Audio 01273 624343
Mary Hampton/Jo Burke/Jim Causley The Albert 01273 730499
BRISTOL
The Duke & The King Thekla 08713 100000
Scarlet's Well Fleece 0117 945 0996
CAMBRIDGE
The Alarm Junction 01223 511511
CARDIFF
Warpath Barfly 029 2066 7658
CARLISLE
Glamour Of The Kill/New Lev Yashin Brickyard 01228 512220
CHELMSFORD
The Wasp Factory/Venkman/ Benjamin Bloom/Alice And Her Red Piano Barhouse 01245 356811
DERBY
A World Defined The Victoria Inn 01332 74 00 91
DUBLIN
Blood Red Shoes Academy 2 00 3531 877 9999
Dropkick Murphys Olympia 00 3531 679 3323
EDINBURGH
Adriana Voodoo Rooms 0131 556 7060
Alphabeat Picture House 0844 847 1740
The Ray Summers Sneaky Pete's 0131 225 1757
GALWAY
Jedward Leisureland 00 35391 521455
The Subs Cuba 00 35391 565991
GLASGOW
Aiden King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
Bombay Bicycle Club QMU 0141 339 9784
Dead Boy Robotics 13th Note Café 0141 553 1638
The Primitives Stereo 0141 576 5018
GLOUCESTER
Wishbone Ash Guildhall Arts Centre 01452 503050
HULL
Chantel McGregor Piper Club 01482 498931
IPSWICH
Your Twenties The Swan 01473 252485
LEEDS
A Grave With No Name Joseph's Well 0113 203 1861
Chew Lips Faversham 0113 245 8817
Geraint Jones Verve 0113 2442272
The Lodger Nation Of Shopkeepers 0113 203 1831
Sarah Borges And The Broken Singles New Roscoe 0113 246 0778
Show Of Hands Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866
LIVERPOOL
The Colours Bumper 0151 707 9902
LLANDUDNO
Joan Armatrading Venue Cymru 01492 872 000
LONDON
Agaskodo Teliverek/Please!/Not Cool Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478
Angus & Julia Stone O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000 WA
The Arcadian Kicks Enterprise 020 7485 2659
Brigade Barfly 0870 907 0999
Chris Conley Barden's Boudoir 0770 865 6633
Chrome Hoof/Health Queen Elizabeth Hall 020 7960 4242
The Depreciation Guild The Old Queen's Head 0207 839 7261
Digable Planets Jazz Café 020 7916 6060
Evelyn Evelyn KOKO 020 7388 3222
Feeder Electric Ballroom 020 7485 9006
Giggs/Professor Green Madame Jojo's 020 7734 2473
Kate Nash Village Underground 020 7422 7505
Kris Drever Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080
LYS/Urusen/Sanjuro/Sunit 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095
The Magic Numbers The Pigalle Club 020 77348142
Matt Schofield Trio 100 Club 020 7636 0933
Mondesir Troubadour Club 020 7370 1434
O Children Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709
Peter Brown/East Road/Gwyn Ashton/Mina Hunt/Andy Smythe Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358
Powderfinger O2 Academy Brixton 0870 771 2000 WA
Saosin Garage 020 7607 1818
Shakespears Sister Bloomsbury Ballroom 020 7404 7612
Slow Walk Monto Water Rats 020 7837 4412
Speakers Corner Quartet/Monika Lidke Band George IV 020 8674 5329
Sunny Day Real Estate Forum 020 7344 0044
The Travelling Band Borderline 020 7734 5547
Vadoinmessico/Heart On Fire Lock Tavern 020 7485 0909
Wanda Jackson/Imelda May Luminaire 020 7372 7123
Wolf People O2 Academy 2 Islington 0870 771 2000 WA
Yes Cadets Queen Of Hoxton 020 7422 0958
MANCHESTER
Bear In Heaven Deaf Institute 0161 330 4019
The Features Roadhouse 0161 228 1789
Fuck Buttons Club Academy 0161 832 1111
I Concur Night And Day Café 0161 236 1822
Joshua Radin Academy 2 0161 832 1111
NEWCASTLE
Sonic Boom Six O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
The Wonder Stuff O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
NORTHAMPTON
Strides Lamplighter 01604 631 125
NORWICH
Breabach Arts Centre 01603 660352
NOTTINGHAM
Belladonna/Ghost In Mirrors Salutation Inn 0115 950 4627
The Bluetones Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484
The Inspector Cluzo Rock City 08713 100000
Wild Palms Bodega Social Club 08713 100000
OXFORD
Efterklang O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
READING
The Crookes Oakford Social Club 0116 255 3956
SHEFFIELD
Feelix Plug 0114 276 7093
Karma To Burn Corporation 0114 276 0262
SOUTHAMPTON
Black Rebel Motorcycle Club University 023 8059 5000
Nosferatu Joiners 023 8022 5612
STOKE ON TRENT
Rumour Has It Sugarmill 01782 214991
SWINDON
Billyjon 12 Bar 01793 535713
Emma Payn The Rolleston 01793 534238
Sweet Plums The Vic 01793 535713
WAKEFIELD
Sara Petite Henry Boons 01924 378126
WOLVERHAMPTON
Idlewild Slade Room 0870 320 7000
YORK
The Reasoning Fibbers 01904 651 250
Sweet Sweet Lies The Duchess 01904 641 413

FRIDAY
April 23

BEDFORD
The Tendons Esquires 01234 340120
BELFAST
Glamour Of The Kill Auntie Annie's 028 9050 1660
BIRMINGHAM
Brigade O2 Academy 3 0870 771 2000 WA
BLACKBURN
Cassini Club/Burnside/New York Alcoholic Anxiety Attack/ Kismet Ryding King George's Hall 01254 582582
BRACKNELL
Ska Cubano/Hypnotic Brass Ensemble/Jamie Renton South Hill Park, Wilde Theatre 01344 484123
BRIGHTON
Big Beat Concorde 2 01273 673311
BRISTOL
Mark Lanegan O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
The Reasoning Fleece 0117 945 0996
Rufus Wainwright Colston Hall 0117 922 3683
The Strange Boys Louisiana 0117 926 5978
CAMBRIDGE
Thomas Truax Portland Arms 01223 357268
CHELMSFORD
Don't Wait Animate Barhouse 01245 356811
CORK
Exit: Pursued By A Bear The Pavilion 00 35321 427 6228
Tony Kenny Opera House 00 35321 270022
CREWE
The Bluetones The Box 01270 257 398
DUBLIN
Brandi Carlile Academy 00 3531 877 9999
The Chapters Button Factory 00 3531 670 9202
Joan Armatrading Vicar St 00 3531 889 4900
Karma To Burn Academy 2 00 3531 877 9999
Scouting For Girls Olympia 00 3531 679 3323
Stand Whelan's 00 3531 475 9372
EDINBURGH
Candi Staton Picture House 0844 847 1740
Efterklang Cabaret Voltaire 0131 220 6176
GLASGOW
Alphabeat O2 ABC 0870 903 3444 WA
Chew Lips O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151 WA
Sweet Sweet Lies King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
Take A Worm For A Walk Week Stereo 0141 576 5018
GLOSSOP
Josephine Oniyama/Helen Rose The Oakwood 01625 583 036
GLOUCESTER
Good Shoes Guildhall Arts Centre 01452 503050
HIGH WYCOMBE
In Gratitude/Motion In Colour/ Portia Conn/The Vegas/Don't Call Home/I've Got Pretty Dreams Nag's Head 01494 521758
HITCHIN
Imicus Club 85 01462 432767
IPSWICH
Mark Elliott PJ McGinty's 01473 251 515
LEEDS
Aiden Cockpit 0113 244 3446
Battlefields Royal Park Cellars 0113 274 1758
Big Time Charlie New Roscoe 0113 246 0778
Fuck Buttons TJ's 0871 230 1094
Hudson Mohawke Nation Of Shopkeepers 0113 203 1831
Left Hand Drive The Owl 0113 256 5242
Lostaura Azucar 0113 2435761
Motus Thornhill Arms 0113 256 5492
The Primitives Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866
Ragnarok Rios 0844 414 2182
Shady Dealz The Buffers 0113 273 2455
Splinter O'Neills 0113 244 0810
Tigers That Talked Cockpit Room 3 0113 2441573
The Wang Dang Doodles Duck And Drake 0113 246 5806
The Wonder Stuff O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
LEICESTER
The Chairmen/The Arcadian Kicks Music Café 0116 262 5050

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LONDON
Black Rebel Motorcycle Club Forum 020 7344 0044
Bo Ningen Barfly 0870 907 0999
Buster Shuffle 12 Bar Club 020 7240 2622
Emcoil 100 Club 020 7636 0933
Evelyn Evelyn Bush Hall 020 8222 6955
The Goodtimes/The Dead Roads Enterprise 020 7485 2659
Jessica Sharman Troubadour Club 020 7370 1434
Ladynoise Purple Turtle 020 7383 4976
The Laurel Collective/Kinema 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095
The Lodger Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191
Logan Sama Rhythm Factory 020 7247 9386
LCD Soundsystem O2 Academy Brixton 0870 771 2000 WA
The Quireboys Jazz Café 020 7916 6060
Reef O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000 WA
Sankorfa Borderline 020 7734 5547
Soap & Skin Union Chapel 020 7226 1686
So Cow/Mazes/Speak And The Spells The Stag's Head 020 7739 6741
The Tomorrow Men Monto Water Rats 020 7837 4412
Treason/Lost Gravity/Bleed To This The Green Dragon 020 86670684
MANCHESTER
Bombay Bicycle Club Academy 0161 832 1111
Juicy Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392
Laide Roadhouse 0161 228 1789
Mostly Autumn Academy 3 0161 832 1111
Squarepusher Opera House 0161 242 2509
NEWCASTLE
A Grave With No Name Telegraph 0191 232 0503
The Inspector Cluzo O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
NORTHAMPTON
Idlewild Roadmender Centre 01604 604222
NORWICH
Balaclava Kid & Dad Arts Centre 01603 660352
NOTTINGHAM
Nosferatu Rock City 08713 100000
Sandi Thom Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484
Son Of Dave Bodega Social Club 08713 100000
OXFORD
Alphabet Backwards Jericho Tavern 01865 311775
The Beat O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000
PETERBOROUGH
The Brink Met Lounge 01733 566100
READING
Your Twenties/Disappearers/ Worship Plug'n'Play 0118 958 1447
SHEFFIELD
Delorean O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
Flying Dinosaurs Leadmill 0114 221 2828
Nerina Pallot Plug 0114 276 7093
Thomas Tantrum University 0114 222 8777
SOUTHAMPTON
Laura Marling Guildhall 023 8063 2601
Shy Child Joiners 023 8022 5612
SOUTHEND
Fashoda Crisis/Cautionhorses Chinnery's 01702 460440
STOKE ON TRENT
The Blue Collars Sugarmill 01782 214991
ST ALBANS
The Slaves Horn 01727 853143
SWINDON
The Bushy Tail The Rolleston 01793 534238
Godsized The Furnace 01793 534238
Halcyon Days The Vic 01793 535713
TUNBRIDGE WELLS
Levellers Assembly Hall 01892 530613
Sonic Boom Six The Forum 08712 777101
WAKEFIELD
Dirty Twister Escobar 01924 332000
WOLVERHAMPTON
Trivium Wulfrun Hall 0870 320 7000
YORK
The Black Spiders The Duchess 01904 641 413
Hey Sholay The Stone Roses Bar 01904 670696


Bombay Bicycle Club, Academy, Manchester

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SATURDAY
April 24


Dan Le Sac Vs Scroobius Pip, Whelan's, Dublin

ABERDEEN
Chew Lips/Party Horse Café Drummond 01224 624642
Isa & The Filthy Tongues The Tunnels 01224 211121
BATH
Ono Palindromes Moles 01225 404445
BEDFORD
Alias Esquires 01234 340120
BELFAST
Blood Red Shoes Auntie Annie's 028 9050 1660
Efterklang Black Box 00 35391 566511
Joan Armatrading Ulster Hall 028 9032 3900
Seth Troxler Stiff Kitten 028 90238700
BIRMINGHAM
Fix Monday Flapper 0121 236 2421
Karma To Burn O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
The Primitives O2 Academy 3 0870 771 2000 WA
BRIDGEND
Belladonna/Ghost In Mirrors The New Angel 0871 230 1094
BRIGHTON
Citizen Fish Engine Room 01273 728 999
Uffie Concorde 2 01273 673311
Wild Palms Jam 0871 230 1094
BRISTOL
Powderfinger O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
Sandi Thom Thekla 08713 100000
CARDIFF
Night Vision Barfly 029 2066 7658
CORK
Declan O'Rourke Cyprus Avenue 00 35321 427 6165
Richard Hawley The Pavilion 00 35321 427 6228
CREWE
Levellers The M Club 01270 216785
DERBY
Larry Garner Band Flowerpot 01332 204955
DUBLIN
The Chapters Button Factory 00 3531 670 9202
Dan Le Sac Vs Scroobius Pip Whelan's 00 3531 475 9372
Glamour Of The Kill Academy 2 00 3531 877 9999
Jedward National Stadium 00 3531 453 3371
EDINBURGH
Bass Clef The Caves 0131 557 8989
Bear In Heaven Sneaky Pete's 0131 225 1757
The Fall Studio 24 0131 558 3758
Joshua Radin Bongo Club 0131 558 7604
UFO Picture House 0844 847 1740
ESHER
The Saw Doctors Sandown Park 01372 463 511
GLASGOW
A Grave With No Name/Oslow/The Feuds Nice'n'Sleazy 0141 333 9637
Catcher Ivory Blacks 0141 221 7871
Fuck Buttons Arches 0141 221 4001
The Inspector Cluzo King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
Less Than Sober O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
The Murderburgers 13th Note Café 0141 553 1638
Penetration Stereo 0141 576 5018
The Storm Society O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151 WA
HITCHIN
Stuart O'Connor Club 85 01462 432767
LEEDS
Ash Metropolitan University 0113 283 2600
Bear Mask Carpe Diem 0113 243 6264
Bilge Pump The Library 0113 2440794
Charlie Bath Adelphi 01943 468615
The Fantastics Wardrobe 0113 222 3434
Goodbye For Now Cockpit 0113 244 3446
Kwame D The Owl 0113 256 5242
Mark Lanegan Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866
Ou Est Le Swimming Pool Stylus 01132 431751
Overdrive Thornhill Arms 0113 256 5492
Phil Meadows Standard Toast Bar 0113 243 9546
The Prowlers New Roscoe 0113 246 0778
Sacred Mother Tongue Rios 0844 414 2182
Set Light Our Kingdom Packhorse 0113 245 3980
LIVERPOOL
My Auntie Sam O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
LONDON
The Alarm O2 Academy Islington 0870 771 2000 WA
Bombay Bicycle Club Forum 020 7344 0044
The Collectable Few Barfly 0870 907 0999
Dragster 12 Bar Club 020 7240 2622
Evelyn Evelyn Bush Hall 020 8222 6955
The Haggis Horns Cargo 0207 749 7840
Jump Peel 020 8546 3516
Kid Carpet Borderline 020 7734 5547
LCD Soundsystem O2 Academy Brixton 0870 771 2000 WA
Ragnarok Underworld 020 7482 1932
The Reasoning O2 Academy 2 Islington 0870 771 2000 WA
Rev 78/Sister Gracie/The Myth Machine Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358
The Screening/Joana & The Wolf/ Creatures Of Love Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191
Son Of Dave Jazz Café 020 7916 6060
The Standards The Lexington 020 7837 5387
These Monsters/Kong/Turbowolf 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095
Tom White Union Chapel 020 7226 1686
Trash Kit/Wet Dog Trinity Centre Hall 0871 230 1094
MANCHESTER
Alphabeat Academy 2 0161 832 1111
Brigade Roadhouse 0161 228 1789
The Colours Jabez Clegg 0161 272 8612
The Pockets Hope Mill 0871 230 1094
Reef Academy 0161 832 1111
The Travelling Band Academy 3 0161 832 1111
NEWCASTLE
Mostly Autumn O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
NORWICH
The Duke And The King Arts Centre 01603 660352
NOTTINGHAM
A Is For Ape Maze 0115 947 5650
Black Rebel Motorcycle Club Rock City 08713 100000
Nerina Pallot Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484
The Paddingtons Bodega Social Club 08713 100000
OXFORD
Age Of Misrule/The Levenshulme Bicycle Orchestra/The Yarns Wheatsheaf 01865 721156
PORTSMOUTH
Good Shoes Wedgewood Rooms 023 9286 3911
READING
Pope Joan Oakford Social Club 0116 255 3956
Ralfe Band South Street Arts Centre 0118 960 6060
SHEFFIELD
Black Spiders/Slaves To Gravity/ Downslide University 0114 222 8777
Don Broco/Hot Pants Leadmill 0114 221 2828
Shakespears Sister O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
Show Of Hands Plug 0114 276 7093
SOUTHAMPTON
Broken Links Joiners 023 8022 5612
STOKE ON TRENT
Molotov Revival Sugarmill 01782 214991
SWINDON
Dirty Deeds The Rolleston 01793 534238
WAKEFIELD
Patriot Other Escobar 01924 332000
StoneRun Snooty Fo x 01924 374455
YORK
Kassius The Duchess 01904 641 413
Your Dirty Secret Fibbers 01904 651 250

SUNDAY
April 25

ABERDEEN
The Fall Warehouse 0844 847 2319
BATLEY
Riotbox The Frontier 01924 442122
BEDFORD
Full Circle Esquires 01234 340120
BIRMINGHAM
Dan Whitehouse Hare And Hounds 0121 444 2081
The King Blues O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
BOURNEMOUTH
The Wonder Stuff O2 Academy 01202 399922 WA
BRIGHTON
Shakespears Sister Concorde 2 01273 673311
Sonic Boom Six Engine Room 01273 728 999
BRISTOL
Baka Beyond Thekla 08713 100000
Karma To Burn O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
CAMBRIDGE
Levellers Junction 01223 511511
CARDIFF
Ralfe Band Clwb Ifor Bach 029 2023 2199
DERBY
The Wickets Vines Bar 01332 367567
DUBLIN
Efterklang Whelan's 00 3531 475 9372
Jedward Vicar St 00 3531 889 4900
EXETER
Ragnarok Cavern Club 01392 495370
GLASGOW
Brigade King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
The Quireboys Oran Mor 0141 552 9224
LEEDS
Bear In Heaven/Bachelorette Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866
Bridge And Tunnel Fenton 0113 245 3908
Elephants On Acid Carpe Diem 0113 243 6264
James Forde Joseph's Well 0113 203 1861
Monmon Northern Monkey 0113 242 6630
Second Journey Garforth Liberal Club 0113 286 2048
The Swellers Cockpit 0113 244 3446
LEICESTER
John Renbourn Musician 0116 251 0080
LIVERPOOL
Chew Lips O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
LONDON
Alan Wilder O2 Academy Islington 0870 771 2000 WA
Courtney Pine Apollo 0870 606 3400
Evelyn Evelyn Bush Hall 020 8222 6955
Fenech-Soler Vibe Bar 020 7377 9880
Jim Moray/Pig Earth The Lexington 020 7837 5387
Larry Graham KOKO 020 7388 3222
Laura Marling Palladium 020 7494 5020
Parkway Drive Forum 020 7344 0044
Paul Brady O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000 WA
Total Descent/The Fellows Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358
MANCHESTER
The Duke And The King Club Academy 0161 832 1111
Gil Scott-Heron Opera House 0161 242 2509
Lights Out Action Roadhouse 0161 228 1789
Mark Lanegan Academy 3 0161 832 1111
Three Trapped Tigers Deaf Institute 0161 330 4019
NEATH
Belladonna/Ghost In Mirrors The Duke 01639 643 892
NEWCASTLE
Ash O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
NOTTINGHAM
Bonbonbonbons Maze 0115 947 5650
Rufus Wainwright Royal Concert Hall 0115 948 2626
Sacred Mother Tongue Rock City 08713 100000
OXFORD
Alphabeat O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
Story Of The Year O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000
PORTSMOUTH
The Pipettes Wedgewood Rooms 023 9286 3911
PRESTON
The Bluetones 53 Degrees 01772 893 000
SHEFFIELD
Larry Garner Band Boardwalk 0114 279 9090
SOUTHAMPTON
999 Joiners 023 8022 5612
TUNBRIDGE WELLS
Crippled Black Phoenix The Forum 08712 777101
WAKEFIELD
Cor Snooty Fox 01924 374455


Alphabeat, O2 Academy, Oxford

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MONDAY
April 26

NME RADIO Jon Hillcock catches up with Everything Everything at 4pm, before they co-headline the NME Radar Tour at King Tut's Wah Wah Hut tonight


Crystal Antlers, Cargo, London

BIRMINGHAM
Lauren Pritchard Hare And Hounds 0121 444 2081
LCD Soundsystem O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
Powderfinger O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

BRISTOL
Audio Bullys Thekla 08713 100000
Cassette Culture Pop Louisiana 0117 926 5978
The Quireboys O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

CAMBRIDGE
Show Without Punch Portland Arms 01223 357268

DUBLIN
Dick Gaughan Whelan's 00 3531 475 9372
Joshua Radin Academy 00 3531 877 9999

EDINBURGH
Roachford Cabaret Voltaire 0131 220 6176
Three Trapped Tigers The Electric Circus 0131 226 4224
Tubelord Sneaky Pete's 0131 225 1757

GLASGOW
Agnieszka Opiola Stereo 0141 576 5018
NME Radar Tour Hurts/Everything Everything/Darwin Deez King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
Joan Armatrading Royal Concert Hall 0141 353 8000
Mark Lanegan Oran Mor 0141 552 9224
The Young Aviators 13th Note Café 0141 553 1638

LEEDS
Black Rebel Motorcycle Club O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
Inspector Cluzo Royal Park Cellars 0113 274 1758
King Charles Nation Of Shopkeepers 0113 203 1831
Trio VD Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866

LONDON
Bear In Heaven/Celestial Bodies/Grain Windmill 020 8671 0700
Boys Like Girls O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000 WA
Brandi Carlile KOKO 020 7388 3222
Codes In The Clouds Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478
Crystal Antlers Cargo 0207 749 7840
Grace Jones Royal Albert Hall 020 7589 8212
Graham Hughes & The Sunshine Kings 100 Club 020 7636 0933
Hypnotic Brass Ensemble/Souljazz Orchestra Scala 020 7833 2022
The Layers/The Telegrams/The Fleas 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095
Sam Sallon/Tim Dickinson/Swann Source Below 020 7434 9130
Shout Out Louds Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709
Stick To Your Guns Underworld 020 7482 1932
Stop Motion Trio/Brokenhill Horses Hope & Anchor 020 7354 1312
Yuck The Rest Is Noise 020 7346 8521

MANCHESTER
Cathedral Academy 3 0161 832 1111
Parkway Drive Academy 0161 832 1111
Sam Amidon Club Academy 0161 832 1111

NEWCASTLE
Idlewild O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

NORWICH
The Futureheads Arts Centre 01603 660352
Story Of The Year Waterfront 01603 632717

NOTTINGHAM
Candi Staton Rock City 08713 100000
Sideways Falling Maze 0115 947 5650

OXFORD
Rufus Wainwright New Theatre, Apollo 0870 606 3500

PORTSMOUTH
Nerina Pallot Wedgewood Rooms 023 9286 3911

SHEFFIELD
Bachelorette Harley 0114 275 2288
Chew Lips O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
Tiffany Page University 0114 222 8777

SOUTHAMPTON
The Pipettes Joiners 023 8022 5612

STOKE ON TRENT
The Swellers Sugarmill 01782 214991

ST ALBANS
Carbon Horn 01727 853143

TUNBRIDGE WELLS
Neon Street The Forum 08712 777101

WAKEFIELD
Matter Theory Escobar 01924 332000

WOLVERHAMPTON
Black Spiders Slade Room 0870 320 7000

TUESDAY
April 27

NME RADIO Tune into NME Radio as Jon Hillcock speaks to Darwin Deez to get all the latest gossip from the NME Radar Tour, from 4pm

ABERDEEN
Joan Armatrading Music Hall 01224 641122

BELFAST
Dan Le Sac Vs Scroobius Pip Queen's University 028 9024 5133

BIRMINGHAM
Brandi Carlile Glee Club 0870 241 5093
The Lines O2 Academy 3 0870 771 2000 WA
The Swellers O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
Three Trapped Tigers Hare And Hounds 0121 444 2081

BOURNEMOUTH
The Temper Trap O2 Academy 01202 399922 WA

BRIGHTON
Alphabeat Concorde 2 01273 673311
Levellers Komedia 01273 647100
Talk Normal Hector's House 01273 681228

BRISTOL
Parkway Drive O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
Rendezvous With Who Louisiana 0117 926 5978
Shy Child Thekla 08713 100000

CAMBRIDGE
The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster Haymakers 01223 367417

CARDIFF
Ono Palindromes Barfly 029 2066 7658
Sonic Boom Six Clwb Ifor Bach 029 2023 2199

CHELMSFORD
Amy Westney Barhouse 01245 356811

DUBLIN
Alex Mathias Trio International Bar 00 3531 677 0647
Cathedral Village 00 3531 475 9372

GLASGOW
Ash O2 ABC 0870 903 3444 WA
The Duke And The King King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

LEEDS
Defeater Joseph's Well 0113 203 1861
The Dusty Ice Cream Wardrobe 0113 222 3434
The Finnlys Mine 0871 230 1094
LCD Soundsystem O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
Story Of The Year Cockpit 0113 244 3446

LIVERPOOL
Black Rebel Motorcycle Club O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
The Quireboys O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

LONDON
Alan Pownall Borderline 020 7734 5547
Bachelorette/Villagers/John & Jehn White Heat @ Madame Jo Jo's 020 7734 2473
Bitches Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191
British Sea Power St Anne's Church 0871 230 1094
Crippled Black Phoenix Luminaire 020 7372 7123
Dying Fetus Underworld 020 7482 1932

CLUB NME
BRIGHTON
SWEET SWEET LIES
AUDIO
01273 606906

Fyfe Dangerfield Bloomsbury Theatre 020 7388 8822
Haydon Spenceley/June Lullaby/Control/Liz And The Ligers Hope & Anchor 020 7354 1312
The Hundred In The Hands Barfly 0870 907 0999
Incisive/Wap Wap Wow 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095
Joe Carnall & The Book Club Monto Water Rats 020 7837 4412
The King Blues O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000 WA
Krakatoa The Gaff 020 7609 3063
Livingston Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709
Lost Twenty/Flexability/On The Spot Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358
The Masonics 100 Club 020 7636 0933
Orangedrink Lemondrink Troubadour Club 020 7370 1434
Rokia Traore KOKO 020 7388 3222
The Rustys Scala 020 7833 2022
Vadoinmessico Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080

MANCHESTER
Basia Bulat Night And Day Café 0161 236 1822
The Bluetones Moho Live 0161 834 8180
Powderfinger Academy 2 0161 832 1111
Roachford Deaf Institute 0161 330 4019

NORWICH
Times New Viking Arts Centre 01603 660352

NOTTINGHAM
The Bronx Rock City 08713 100000
The Futureheads Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484

OXFORD
John Cooper Clarke O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
The Primitives O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000

PORTSMOUTH
Dance Gavin Dance Wedgewood Rooms 023 9286 3911
Portia Conn Cellars 0871 230 1094

PRESTON
NME Radar Tour Hurts/Everything Everything/Darwin Deez 53 Degrees 01772 893 000

READING
Nedry Oakford Social Club 0116 255 3956

SHEFFIELD
UFO O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

SOUTHAMPTON
Scarlet Soho Joiners 023 8022 5612

STOKE ON TRENT
Chew Lips Sugarmill 01782 214991

ST ALBANS
The Understated Horn 01727 853143

WOLVERHAMPTON
Arch Enemy Wulfrun Hall 0870 320 7000

YORK
Lost From Atlas Fibbers 01904 651 250

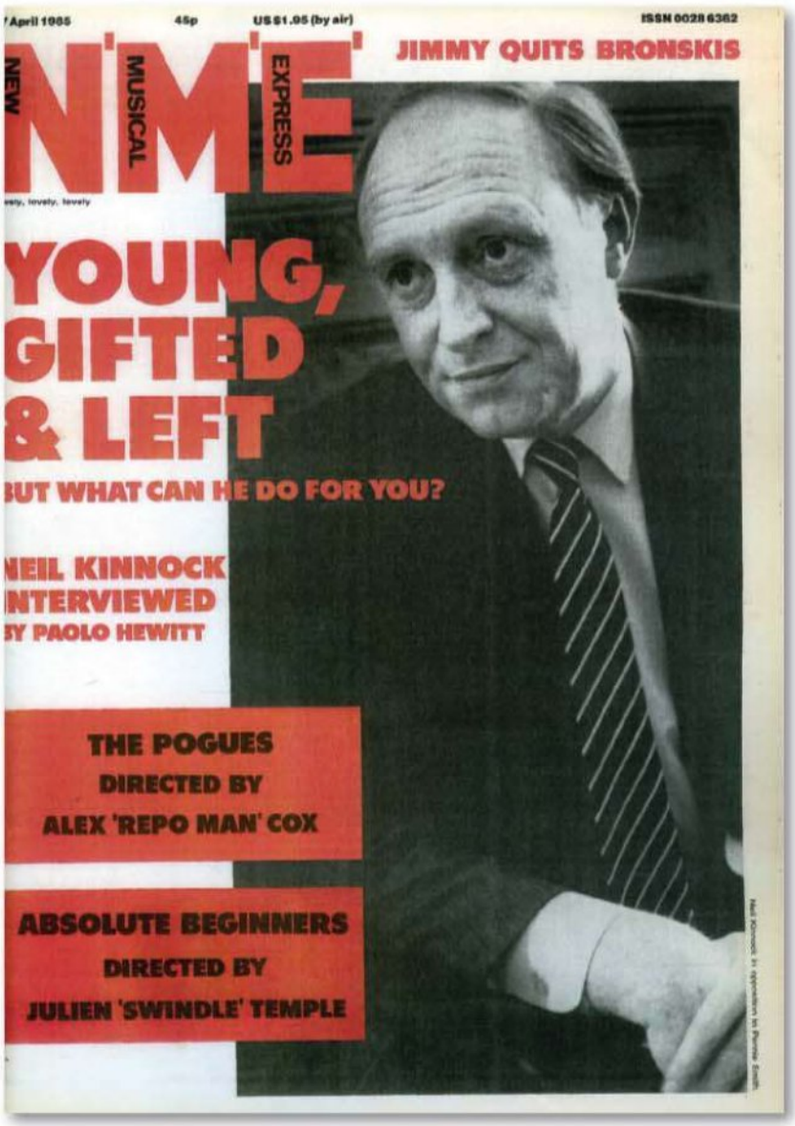

The Bronx, Rock City, Nottingham

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THIS WEEK IN 1985

NEVER MIND THE KINNOCK, SHANE MACGOWAN DRINKS!



NME MEETS LABOUR LEADER

Neil Kinnock is seen by many as a real breath of fresh air for the Labour party. As Paolo Hewitt writes in this first of two *NME* cover stories on Kinnock (the second coming in June '87, the week of the General Election that he will ultimately lose to Margaret Thatcher), he "represents that British tradition of the working class man, yet is young enough to be looking to the future – an ideal combination for those disaffected by both Tory policies and Labour's former weak incoherence". And this appearance in *NME* is no David Cameron-esque, empty posturing in search of the yoof vote. Early on in the piece he may claim he was once a regular reader of the magazine ("It used to print the words to songs, which was bloody handy"), but in response to a question about whether he has thought of ways to make politics more exciting for young people, he bluntly states that he doesn't "think the first objective of it is to make it exciting."

"What I do as a socialist is exalt the idea of the individual," he offers. "The liberty, the economic, political, social, racial, sexual liberty of the individual is the objective of socialism. And what we know is that you can only secure that liberty by collective means".



SHANE MACGOWAN TAKES MEASURES

"Of course my state of health worries me," Shane MacGowan tells Don Watson on the set of the video to 'A Pair Of Brown Eyes'. "I realise now I just can't go on drinking and drinking and never eating. It worries me, but I'm taking all the measures I possibly can." Short of stopping drinking? "Yeah."



SOMERVILLE BLUES

Without personally informing the rest of Bronski Beat, singer Jimmy Somerville quits the group that made him a star. "Originally inspired by London's politicised gay scene," writes Deputy Editor Tony Stewart, "Somerville was unable to resolve the conflicts between his devout socialism and the wealth that came with success."

Also In The Issue That Week

- Nick Cave is reviewed live in Edinburgh. "The converted clap politely with expectancy, the others are looking for a good kicking and shouting abuse because they are not getting it," writes Andrea Miller
- Director Julien Temple talks about his film adaptation of *Absolute Beginners*, starring David Bowie, Keith Richards, Ray Davies and a 16-year-old Patsy Kensit
- An advert in the Classified section offers a tape of fart noises for £2.50, with the tagline 'Stereo Cassette Of Appalling Flatulence (as featured on *The Tube*)'
- Neil Taylor's Virgin Prunes album review opens thus: "There used to be a time when music was far more important than haircuts but these days, quite sensibly, the most vital thing is the cut of your bonce"

NME

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CLUES ACROSS

1+12A Paramore unique? Leave it out! (3-4-9)
5 (See 1 down)
8+6D Cooking par excellence at this One Little Indian establishment in the '90s (8-2-11)
9 (See 16 down)
11+21A Getting outer rib broken with dance act of the '90s (3-5)
12 (See 1 across)
14+18D That's us off for an Arab Strap performance (4-2-2)
15 (See 30 across)
17 Lads from Liverpool on the Domino label who just 'Do It' (6)
19 Aussies who took the 'Wide Open Road', appearing as a 'Trick Of The Light' (8)
21 (See 11 across)
23 They had an 'Unbelievable' sound 20 years ago (1-1-1)
24 Den of Mumford & Sons (3-4)
25 Ron Wood includes a Ministry number (1-1-1)
27 Someone undertaking a journey to the sacred place of an Eric Clapton recording (7)
28 (See 2 down)
29 Incorrectly file album by Inspiral Carpets (4)
30+15A Mute label band formed in 1982 by Bon Harris, Douglas McCarthy and David Gooday (6-3)

CLUES DOWN

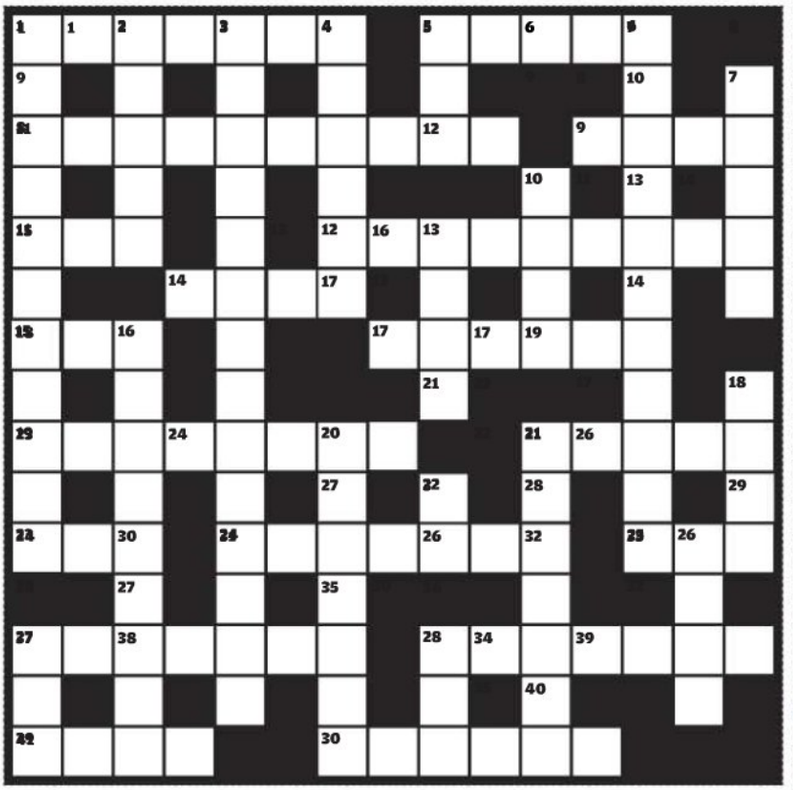
1+5A The Courteeners to rule OK! We don't stand an earthly (4-4-3-5)
2+28A Hardcore band who shared their 'Common Dreads' with us (5-7)
3 Nothing to dream of or to look forward to, such as an album by Good Shoes (2-4-2-6)
4 American finish for Wilco's album '_____ Hotel Foxtrot' (6)
5 They were talking about 'My Generation' (3)
6 (See 8 across)
7 Linkin Park number not coming over very loud or clear (5)
10 Nips back to see indie band that later evolved into Gene (4)
13 Goth band, fronted by Ian Astbury, whose single 'She Sells Sanctuary' was a hit in both the '80s and '90s (4)
16+9A "*Everybody needs a bosom for a pillow, everybody needs a bosom*", 1997 (7-2-4)
18 (See 14 across)
20 And more, perhaps, from Depeche Mode (5-2)
21+26D Theatre wimp, somehow, gets a *Rocky Horror Show* number for Damian (3-4-4)
22 Start laughing at an Amy MacDonald song (1-1)
26 (See 21 down)
27 I get into comeback LP from John Lydon's band (1-1-1)
28 Put in place missing word from Lou Reed album '__ The Twilight Reeling' (3)

.....

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First correct one out of the hat wins a bag of CDs, T-shirts and books!



MARCH 27 ANSWERS

ACROSS
1 Fire Like This, 8 Liars, 9 Outbursts, 11+30A Miss World, 13+17A Hand In Glove, 15 Nancy, 16+26A Campfire Songs, 18 Pop, 20+7D One Of Us, 21 Full Moon, 24 Bristol, 27 ONE, 28 Oh, 29 Elvis, 31 Kids.

DOWN
1 Falcon, 2 Reason To Believe, 3 Lost Myself, 4 Kooks, 5 Tutu, 6 I Put A Spell On You, 10 Sid Vicious, 12+17D Sick Of Goodbyes, 14 Noel, 19 Pulse, 22 Nash, 25 Tusk, 28+23D Odd Blood.



SEVEN INCH STORIES BY PHILLIP MARSDEN



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FANMAIL

YOU GET IN TOUCH, WE RESPOND, THINGS GET OUT OF HAND

Edited by Emily Mackay

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From: Mark Keast
To: *NME*
This is probably not the letter that you want to receive in Record Store Week – it's not even the one I want to write. I was once almost a resident in the shop of my choice, the fantastic Avalanche in Edinburgh. What happened next I'm afraid was a move to Belfast where finding a similar store proved beyond me. Faced with the choice of the soulless high street or the cheap online I quickly succumbed to the latter... I recently moved back to Edinburgh and walked past Avalanche and read their heart-melting letter to their customers highlighting the impossible position they find themselves in. I honestly don't know where we go from here, but sadly I think many more stores will disappear on the way. Music is bigger than this though and I have faith in its ability to evolve regardless of what transpires.

From: *NME*
To: Mark Keast
Do you think there's any point in trying to save record shops, then? The evolution of music-buying does seem to point to their doom, but then, the revival in vinyl and even cassettes shows that people do cling on to the physical... Isn't there still a place for rack-flickers? – EM

From: Mark Keast
To: *NME*
I don't think that this means the end of record shops, but I do think that there will be considerably less of them and the focus will shift to be much more on the physical product, which takes things back almost a complete circle to the days of vinyl dominance... If you mean, do I think there is a point trying to save record shops only for them to sell the latest Killers album on CD, then I would say no, there isn't one. But neither is there enough value in the Bikini Kill seven-inch market to keep the small number of records stores we still have alive.

From: *NME*
To Mark Keast
Not all doom, then; a few unavoidable casualties along the way means that those that do care about record shops will care even harder it seems. Now, get off Amazon and go buy something you didn't know you wanted! – EM

Get in touch at any of the above addresses, plus winners should email *letters@nme.com* to claim their prize.

DO YOU LOVE US NOW?

From: Auryy
To: *NME*
It's my third year as a subscriber and your zillionth new layout (*NME*, April 10). What's wrong with you? Don't you love the way you look? Because, you know, you are beautiful whatever your font size is... Take a leaf out of your friend Beth Ditto's book and start accepting and loving yourself no matter how you look!

From: *NME*
To: Auryy
We at *NME* would like to reassure you that our new look isn't the result of insecurity – far from it. We've got a new do and boxfresh dancing shoes and we are feeling pretty damn sexy. And someone seems to have noticed... – EM

From: Andy Jones
To: *NME*
The newly designed *NME* covers are sexual. I approve.

GOOD GIRL GONE AD

From: Billy Hill
To: *NME*
Rihanna is a bit of a hypocrite for slagging off product placement in music videos (*NME*, April 10) when [in the video for 'SOS'] she texts, listens to music and laughs at a Nokia phone, which isn't really for a "political reason". But I don't really think plugging a phone matters, if anything it's hilarious. I loved it when Lady Gaga plugged bread and dating websites in the same video but it doesn't mean I'm gonna leave my girlfriend and stuff my face with toast. If it makes artists money in the age of illegal downloads then it's fine with me!

From: *NME*
To: Billy Hill
Yes, it was a bit like reading Muse claim they hate over-ostentatious stage shows, wasn't it? But Rihanna's selective ethics aside, don't you think there's still something degrading about overt advertising like that? There's less and less stigma attached to soundtracking adverts (Delphic, The Flaming Lips, etc.), but actually whoring yourself out to prance around like you're on QVC devalues your music a bit, doesn't it? – EM

From: Billy Hill
To: *NME*
Yeah, I see your point but it's just pop stars really and they can get away with it because they are perceived as commercial anyway; and the fact that it is so obvious makes it a bit unbelievable. I don't think the whole industry is a million miles away from new bands clutching phones and purses, especially pop stars such as Marina and Goulding. I would love to see Kate Nash surfing eBay in a video. Artists will probably get over their embarrassment if it saves their music.

From: *NME*
To: Billy Hill
Anyway, your ruthlessly pragmatic approach is probably more honest than my half-arsed quasi-leftie squeamishness. All about selling something, I suppose. Perhaps the next These New Puritans video should just be them performing in front of a green screen with 'YOUR NAME HERE' plastered all over it. Biffy could promote horse liniment, The Drums anti-dandruff shampoo, Foals could model H&M... – EM

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STALKER

From: Neil
To: *NME*
This is me and Yuki from Asobi Seksu after their gig at Cargo in London. She was friendly!

VIEW FROM THE PIT

From: Mandy Jansen
To: *NME*
I'm writing in to say I don't share the opinions Lisa Wright has on The View's "progression" (*NME* March 27). So yeah, 'Which Bitch?' does sound similar to 'Hats Off...' but I don't mind. It's their sound I fell in love with in the first place. I don't want them to make a 'Humbug', I just want them to make an album that's The View. They're the one band who isn't going all electro and synth, which I hate!

From: *NME*
To: Mandy Jansen
Mandy, I think the point Lisa was making was more that while 'Which Bitch?' wasn't exactly 'Metal Box', it did push The View's boundaries a bit and, from what she heard that night, their third LP looks to have gone back to playing it safe. Good news for you, then! Personally the only new View direction I want to see them going in is into a canyon – EM

LIGHTS OUT

From: Ruby Steer
To: *NME*
I am so disappointed by Ellie Goulding's debut album 'Lights'. After the two singles earlier released from the album I was eager to hear the rest... to my surprise it was a complete letdown. There was not one single from the album (apart from the two released) that I thought was decent. I was really pleased for Ellie when she won the Editors Choice Award, but now I can see that there were others in the category who possessed more talent than herself. I thought she'd be the bright new light of electro-pop, but she burned out in two singles. What a shame.

From: *NME*
To: Ruby Steer
I feel your Ellie-based pain, Ruby. I was so excited about 'Wish I Stayed' and 'Under The Sheets' I was practically foaming at the mouth in our New Music Of 2010 issue. Then, eagerly unwrapping the debut, I found... that was all there was. It was like getting a Kinder Egg filled with sawdust. A lesson in not rushing things, there, for both me and Ellie, I think... – EM

BYRNEING LIKE FIRE

From: Will Conder
To: *NME*
'Here Lies Love' is a brilliant album. This did not surprise me. David Byrne and Fatboy Slim are both incredible musicians, and together they have made something fantastic. What did surprise me was that when browsing iTunes, I could see its average user review was 2.5 stars. I looked at the reviews users had written, and the majority of them were saying how the artists should be ashamed of themselves for making an album about an "evil woman". Byrne and Cook have done something I didn't think was possible in this day and age. They have managed to offend and spark controversy with an album. Admittedly, they're only offending a few twats who express their anger using iTunes reviews, but still, kudos to them!

From: *NME*
To: Will Conder
I agree with your assessment of 'Here Lies Love'... but don't you think there's an argument to be made that David Byrne has glossed over the nastier sides of Imelda Marcos' life and her husband's regime (killings, disappearances, embezzlement, etc.)? His aim seems to have been to understand rather than judge, but by writing what's mainly a sympathetic album from her point of view, there's a risk of turning her into a sort of Evita figure – EM

From: Will Conder
To: *NME*
I see your point; I can understand why that might piss people off. On the other hand, the crimes she committed is all most people think about Marcos. For me, Byrne and Cook are trying to remind people that even villains like her are people, and they do this by trying to incorporate the often-overlooked parts of her life and personality. There's a big reason why they don't mention the shoes, and that's because they don't need to: everyone already knows about them. It's the same for the killings and embezzlement. I don't think there's a risk of making her an Evita-like figure because most people know too much about her already. If someone wrote an album about Adolf Hitler and how he got the German economy working, how his party gave out free bread to the poor, and how they built the first European motorways rather than about the concentration camps, people would still think he was evil. People who are offended by 'Here Lies Love' should realise this album is just giving another point of view. It's not purely glossing over Marcos' nastier side, it's pointing out the other sides she had to herself.

From: *NME*
To: Will Conder
Textbook rebuff there, Will. I shall take off my devil's advocate hat and go sit in the corner – EM



STALKER

From: Wesley Fleet
To: *NME*
This is me and my wife, Melanie, with Bonehead after The Vortex gig at Wolverhampton Varsity in March. A top bloke!

Web Slinging

The highlight of this week's NME.COM blogs

KURT ON CAMERA

Thankfully, the rumours of Robert Pattinson being lined up to play Kurt Cobain last week proved unfounded, leading *NME.COM* Deputy Editor Luke Lewis to speculate who might be a fitting choice for the role. Ian Beale? Gavin Rossdale? The bloke from the Go Compare adverts? You had suggestions too, of course... Read the FULL write-ups on *NME.COM* now



Best of the responses...

I'm not down with this Kurt Cobain 'poor guy' shit. If he wanted a say in his legacy, maybe he should have bothered to stay around. As for the film, it will probably just hype up the myth of righteous suicide even more.
Vicky

Joe Anderson. He played Peter Hook in the film *Control* about Joy Division and, as well as covering some of their songs, he has also done covers of The Beatles. Plus, if he grew his hair he'd look exactly like him. He would be PERFECT. Stick to bland vampires, Pattinson.
Anon

The bloke from the BT ads.
Alex

Morgan Freeman.
KingSandwell

Owen Wilson.
Carlos

ANYONE but Pattzy, and please don't stereotype all teenage girls, many of us are not like that at all, who the frack is Pete Wentz anyway?
JT

Sawyer from *Lost*!
One For Colin Never Will

Joe Anderson! He's Kurt's lost twin. He can act and sing and play the rock star!
Lo

Find a new actor. The movie doesn't need to piggyback off the hype of *Twilight*. And I'm with you, Vicky. He left his family and friends in the lurch, they might as well make some money off him.
Rains

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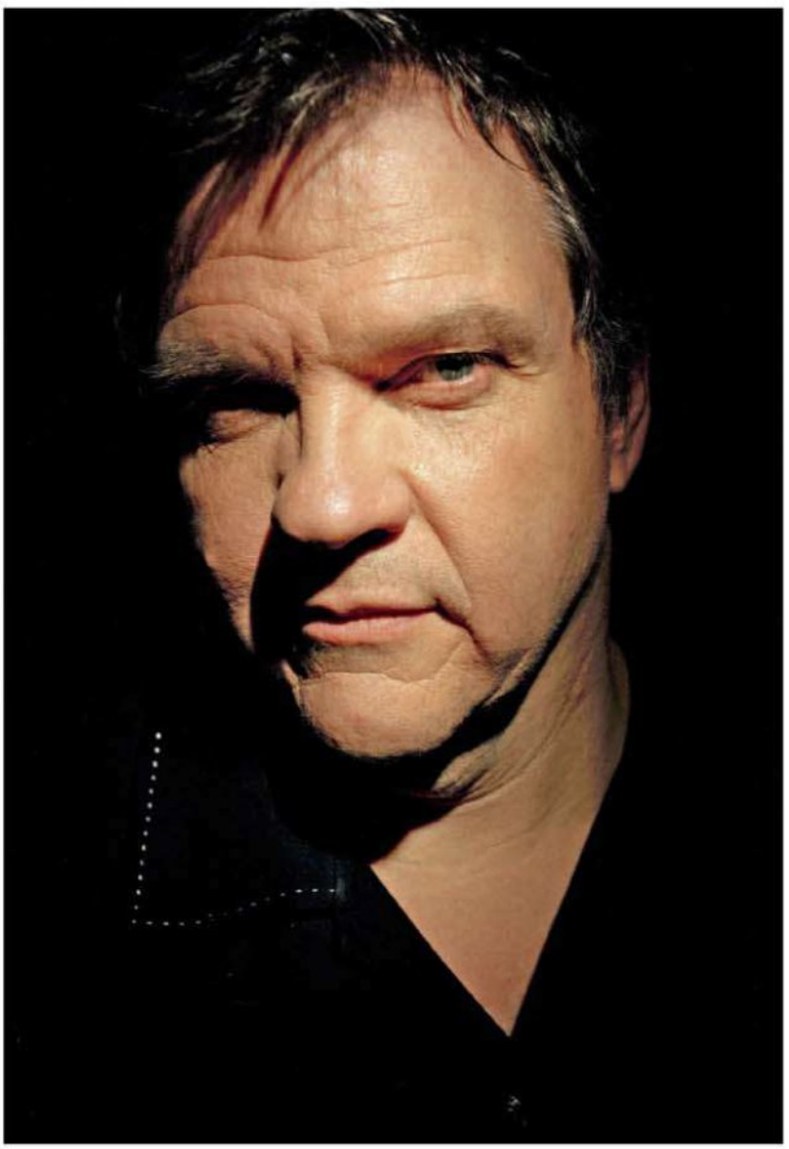
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DOES ROCK'N'ROLL KILL BRAIN CELLS?

TESTING MUSICIANS' MEMORIES AFTER A LIFETIME OF ABUSE

This Week

MEAT LOAF



QUESTION 1

Name your 1980s studio albums in order.
"OK. 'Dead Ringer', 'Midnight At The Lost And Found', 'Bad Attitude', 'Blind Before I Stop'. The '80s were not good for me. It started to pick up after '88 and get better. There were highlights in the '80s, doing a duet on 'Bad Attitude' with Roger Daltrey, that was great, doing the duet with Cher was fantastic. Other than that it sucked."
Correct



QUESTION 2

How many weeks did 'I Would Do Anything For Love (But I Won't Do That)' spend at Number One in the UK?
"I couldn't possibly tell you, I have no clue. It spent a few! The one thing I do know is that people thought we were gonna be Number One for Christmas but Mr Blobby from *Noel's House Party* bumped us out of the Number One slot. Which kinda sucked."
Incorrect, it was seven weeks



QUESTION 3

To the nearest 100,000, how many copies does 'Bat Out Of Hell' still sell annually to this day?
"I just read this in the newspaper actually – I laugh every time I hear it, they say 200,000 around the world. It's possible, but it makes me laugh. Every time I go do a TV show I hear "Bat Out Of Hell' still sells over 200,000 copies a year'. I'm going, 'Where do they get this number? Then I grin."
Correct

QUESTION 4

What's the name of the drive-thru in the video for 'Paradise By The Dashboard Light'?
"You mean the second one? There's two 'Paradise...' videos. That was for the movie *Leap Of Faith*... I have no clue, I'm not great at paying attention to stuff."
Incorrect. It was El Monte

QUESTION 5

Complete the following lyric from 'Nocturnal Pleasure': "Barbarians prowl in shadows/Their heads rocking with rodents..."
"I really have no idea! I can't even begin to tell you what that means! Is it *'groaning greasy pleasure'*? Something like that? Sometimes you have to wonder how Jim Steinman thinks."
Incorrect. It was "Motorcycles reproduce in nocturnal alleys, groaning with greasy pleasure"

QUESTION 6

What was your stage name in South Park *before Chef suggests you beef up a bit and change it to Meat Loaf?*
"Cous Cous."
Correct

QUESTION 7

What was your first screen appearance?
"That's easy, that was in *State Fair* with Pat Boone, I played Boy In Stand. Half the times it's shown on TV I'm edited out!"
Correct



QUESTION 8

How many naked female sea nymphs are there on the 'Dead Ringer' album cover?
"There must be two because there's a Dead Ringer [on a motorbike]."
Incorrect. There are three

QUESTION 9

Which single was your biggest hit during your early stint on the Motown label?
"'What You See Is What You Get'. There were some cool little moments on that record. The guy recording before us was Stevie Wonder, making 'Innervisions'. We would be sitting up there going, 'Wow, I've never heard anything like that before'. One day Stevie was hanging out and they played this really corny song [of ours] and Stevie Wonder heard it and said, 'Can I play piano on that?' So Stevie played piano on this corny song of mine."
Correct

QUESTION 10

What is Cher drinking in the bar in the 'Dead Ringer For Love' video?
"Kool Aid? You don't know what Kool Aid is? It's a thing your mom would make, a package of stuff and you mix it with water and they put about 80,000 cups of sugar in it and send you outside to play in the yard."
Incorrect. It was a pint of beer

Total Score

5/10

"I feel the questions were rigged! It wasn't about my memory – it was about whether I would make a good police investigator!"

INTERVIEW BY MARK BEAUMONT PHOTOS: CELEBRITY PICTURES, REX

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SUMMER IS COMING...

If you are fretting about how you're going to get yourself tickets to some sold-out UK festival this year, then stop. For as you will see over the next 12 pages, there are a variety of amazing events taking place but a short trip to the continent away. Many have line-ups that trounce even the strongest weekends over here (in fact, some are way longer than a weekend!), not to mention, in many cases, infinitely more pleasant weather and far cheaper tickets. So read on and find yourself a great festival experience AND a summer break rolled into one...

Hamish

Hamish MacBain
Assistant Editor, NME

NME EURO FESTIVALS 2010

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HEINEKEN OPEN'ER FESTIVAL

JULY 1-4



Still less than a decade old, the Heineken Open'er Festival began as a one-stage, one-day affair (The Chemical Brothers helmed the debut) and has since ballooned into a four-day, seven-stage shindig. One of its biggest plus points is its price – this year it's about £80 to get in for all four days, but the festival chiefs have still managed to secure huge names (Kasabian, Klaxons and Empire Of The Sun are confirmed so far). Another winning point is that unlike many British festivals, where the music is dead and buried by 11pm, Open'er is practically nocturnal. The music doesn't gear up until 3pm and continues until 5am, with late-night specialists such as Crystal Castles having wowed into the early hours in the past. The timings allow you to either indulge in lie-ins or head into the local town, Gdynia – a coastal settlement handy for stocking up on supplies and a more sophisticated chow down. The festival site isn't big on 'atmosphere', with chiefs concentrating on honing the bill with the biggest names rather than sorting out healing fields and whatnot; the site is essentially a massive airfield, making it one for music purists there for the bands. All in all, it's not hard to see why music fans are flocking to Poland as Open'er gets bigger and better every year.

ANDY WILLSHER

LINE-UP

Kasabian • Klaxons • Hot Chip • Empire Of The Sun • Gorillaz Sound System Grace Jones • Pavement • The Hives Pearl Jam • Yeasayer • Regina Spektor Nas and Damian Marley • Ben Harper and Relentless7 • Skunk Anansie • Tinariwen Tricky • Matisyahu

WHERE

Gdynia, Gdynia-Kosakowo Airfield, Poland

DIRECTIONS

You can fly direct from London, Birmingham, Liverpool or Doncaster then hop, skip and jump on a bus

WEATHER

Sunny and warm enough to flash some flesh

FOOD & DRINK

A multitude of food stalls including organic, veggie and meaty keep the adventurous and the home-comfort food-eaters happy, while beer's a mere £1.30 (PLN 6) a pint

ACCOMMODATION

The campsite holds 20,000 pitches, so you'll probably find a space!

WEBSITE

www.opener.pl

COST

£88 (PLN 390) approx for a four-day ticket with camping

WIN!

We have 1 pair of tickets to give away for Heineken Open'er Festival. For a chance to win*, head to *NME.COM/win* and answer this: How many stages does Heineken Open'er Festival have? a) 1 b) 7 c) 12

* FIRST CORRECT ENTRY CHOSEN AT MIDNIGHT ON MONDAY, MAY 3 WILL WIN USUAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY, AVAILABLE AT *NME.COM/terms*

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BILBAO BBK LIVE

JULY 8-10



Now in its fifth year, Bilbao BBK Live festival is a relative newcomer on the European festival scene. Yet it's got a line-up which has gone from strength to strength with each year that has passed. This year the festival, which will take place from July 8-10, will be headlined by the mighty Pearl Jam and Rammstein.

Bilbao BBK Live is a three-day festival that takes place in the outskirts of Bilbao city. With 40,000 capacity and two main stages, the festival's schedule guarantees that acts won't overlap, so you won't miss a thing. Previous editions of the festival have included acts such as Depeche Mode, Jane's Addiction, Red Hot Chili Peppers and Primal Scream. It's come a long way in a short amount of time: the 2009 edition even being one of the finalists of the European Festival Awards in the category of Best Medium Festival. The festival site, located on top of a hill and surrounded by mountains, offers breathtaking views over the city of Bilbao. While in the festival, take the opportunity to visit the city, just an easy 10-minute bus ride from the festival site. Bilbao is a modern city famous for its architecture, museums and gastronomy, and it's just a stone's throw away from the coast. And if you're not into all that, feel comforted by the fact that Jet are on the bill.

LINE-UP

Pearl Jam • Rammstein • Slayer • Manic Street Preachers • Faith No More • Jet Paul Weller • Gogol Bordello • Dropkick Murphys • Skunk Anansie • Rise Against Coheed & Cambria • Bullet For My Valentine • Alice In Chains

WHERE

Kobetamendi, a 15-minute walk from Bilbao city centre

DIRECTIONS

Two low-cost airlines operate direct flights from London to Bilbao (Easyjet from Stansted and Vueling from Heathrow). Ryanair flies to Santander, just an hour away from Bilbao

WEATHER

Unpredictable but generally sunny and hot

FOOD & DRINK

The Basque region is known as the best for food in Spain – so good!

ACCOMMODATION

Ticket includes camping

WEBSITE

www.bilbaobbklive.com/2010/

COST

£65 for a three-day ticket (limited promotional price)

WIN!

We have two pairs of tickets for Bilbao BBK Live*. Head to *NME.COM/win* and answer this:

For how many years has Bilbao BBK Live been running?

a) 1 b) 5 c) 102

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COKE LIVE

AUGUST 20-21



Do you sometimes feel like you need to go to the Coke Clinic? No, not a place where they send rock's tired and emotional refugees to eat brown rice, drink water and centre their chakras, but a recreation, relaxation and non-dodgy-massage haven that's just one of the many morsels of genius ready to be snarfed from the banquet of festival delights that is Coke Live. In its fifth year, this sister festival to the country's Heineken Open'er is based in the chest-heavingly beautiful city of Krakow, Poland's cultural capital. Sponsored by the makers of the brown fizzy goodness that fixes us when we're broken, for a mere £50 or so (which, let's face it, would barely keep you in dog burgers over two days at a UK festival) you can pop your eyes out at a mouthwatering line-up across three stages that in recent years has pulled in the likes of The Killers, Kaiser Chiefs and The Streets as well as the untried pleasures of the Polish music scene. And when you've had your fill of musical thrills, there's no cross-country treks back to warmth and safety – the campsite (complete with mobile phone charging points, 24-hour canine-free catering, showers and – oh the decadence – baths) is just 300 metres from the main stage. You can practically fall that distance! You probably will as well, won't you, reprobates.

DANNY NORTH

LINE-UP

Muse • The Chemical Brothers • 30 Seconds To Mars • NERD. These are the only bands so far confirmed (with Muse as headliners) but 2009's line-up included The Killers, 50 Cent, Nas and The Streets, while 2008's featured The Prodigy, Timbaland and Kaiser Chiefs

WHERE

Aviation Museum, Krakow, Poland

DIRECTIONS

You can fly to Krakow from Leeds/Bradford, Manchester, London or Glasgow or if you're feeling scenic get the Eurostar and change at Brussels then Cologne. Then get a bus, taxi or streetcar to the museum

WEATHER

Radiant with a late summer glow

FOOD & DRINK

All your usual festival favourites from noodles to nachos and Lidl-esque prices. Plus try the amazing Polish beer

ACCOMMODATION

Camping, or you can get a hostel in the city

WEBSITE

www.livefestival.pl

COST

Approximately £50 (PLN 220) for a two-day ticket

WIN!

We have 1 pair of tickets to give away for Coke Live. To be in with a chance of winning*, head to *NME.COM/win* and answer this question: Where is Coke Live held?
a) Warsaw b) Krakow
c) Gdansk

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FREQUENCY

AUGUST 19-21





Austria is a ridiculously wholesome country, isn't it? Fresh alpine air, bodybuilding, edelweiss and apple strudel, bright-eyed youths frolicking in lederhosen through the foothills, rosy-cheeked mädchen milking cows on high meadows... sorry. Anway, in keeping with their nation's clean-lunged healthfulness, the folks at Frequency are caring for the health of the planet by working with the Austrian Institute For Applied Ecology on Green Stage, a plan to make their festival as sustainable as it is awesome. And that's a great fat wobbling pile of awesome – six stages, three days and two festivals in one worth of japes. Yes, two festivals in one – the already full-to-heaving line-up of the Day Park's big rock names (Radiohead and Nine Inch Nails have graced their billings in previous years) gives way at dusk to the (dum dum DUM) Night Park, where beatheads can get down to the dancier side of things until dawn comes again. Frequency's been something of a (slowly) traveling festival over its 10 years, having started off in (ohhhhh) Vienna, before moving to Salzburg and now the charming Lower Austrian city of St Pölten, which might not ever have had any Number One '80s synth-pop hits written about it, but is still a hell of a lot nicer than Leeds (sorry, Leeds). You might want to get in there quick before it ups sticks again...

TOM OXLEY

LINE-UP

Muse • The Specials • La Roux • Mumford & Sons • Delphic • Massive Attack Hot Chip • The Cribs • The Gaslight Anthem• Diplo • White Lies • Yeasayer Shout Out Louds • Black Rebel Motorcycle Club • Skunk Anansie • NOFX • Die Toten Hosen • 30 Seconds To Mars • Get Well Soon • John Digweed • Major Lazer Tiefschwarz • Billy Talent • Jan Delay Fool's Gold • The Asteroids Galaxy Tour Turntablerocker • Daisy Dares You

FM4 Frequency

WHERE

Green Park, St Pölten, Austria

DIRECTIONS

You can fly to Vienna from most major UK airports, then get a train to St Pölten and a shuttle bus to the festival

WEATHER

Autumnally yours in mountain sunshine

FOOD & DRINK

Much better lager than you'd ever find at a UK festival and more wurst than you can shake a sausage at. Don't leave without trying a Wiener schnitzel

ACCOMMODATION

Camping, caravan or there's lots of fairly priced hotels and hostels in St Pölten

WEBSITE

www.frequency.at

COST

£110 for a three-day ticket with camping and parking, through Lastminute.com

WIN!

We have 5 pairs of tickets to give away for Frequency. To enter the competition*, head to *NME.COM/win* and answer this:

In which city did Frequency start?

a) Salzburg b) Graz

c) Vienna

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BENICASSIM

JULY 15-18





At *NME* we've tried and tested every weekender going and we can safely say this is one of the all-round winners. Spread over four days and boasting about half a million bands of exceptional pedigree, from international superstars to the niche heroes of tomorrow, it offers some of the best musical bang for your buck, and that's before you get onto the fringe benefits.

Which are, since you ask: the baking sunshine, the free-flowing vodka límons, the proximity of a huge sandy beach, and the all-round laid-back vibe. Think of it like an extended summer holiday where every day ends with Hot Chip gigs. In fact, loads of people do combine it with a few days in Barcelona up the coast or the Costa Del Sol. The ticket comes with a nine-day camping pass, so you don't even need to leave the area.

The music doesn't start up until nightfall (around 9pm), so you have the entire day to chill before a full night of raging ensues. The shuttle buses back to the hotels run until 7am and nothing much shuts before then, so the punters – a mix of Europeans and clued-up Brits – party all night. If you can sneak backstage to where the free booze flows around a full-on swimming pool, we'll see you there.

LINE-UP

Klaxons • Kasabian • Dizzee Rascal
The Prodigy • Vampire Weekend • Foals
Echo & The Bunnymen • Mumford & Sons
Hot Chip • The Cribs • Four Tet • Leftfield

fib Heineken 2010

WHERE

Benicàssim, Spain

DIRECTIONS

Numerous Budget airlines service Alicante, Valencia and Barcelona, so take your pick

WEATHER

Perfection itself

FOOD & DRINK

All kinds of Spanish delicacies will line your stomach in preparation for the mammoth beers and endless vodka límons

ACCOMMODATION

There's a hotel next to the site and several on the coast a short shuttle bus away. Camping's available too

WEBSITE

www.fiberfib.com/

COST

£160 plus booking fee

WIN!

We have two four-day tickets to give away for Benicàssim. To be in with a chance of winning them*, simply head to *NME.COM/win* and answer this question:

What can be found in the backstage area at Benicàssim?
a) a swimming pool
b) a snooker table
c) a ski slope

* FIRST 2 CORRECT ENTRIES CHOSEN AT MIDNIGHT ON MONDAY, MAY 3 WILL WIN USUAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY, AVAILABLE AT *NME.COM/terms*

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MUSILAC

JULY 16-18



Situated on the gently sloping shores of a lake in southeast France, midway between Lyon and the skiing hotspot of Chamonix (though there'll be no snowboarding Sebastians around in July), Musilac's key selling point is its location. You'll be hard-pushed to find a festival this sun-kissed and idyllic so close to home: hop on an early morning Eurostar and you'll be pitching your tent by mid-afternoon.

The nearest UK equivalent would be Secret Garden Party, though it's a fair bit bigger than that. Refreshingly, the emphasis is not on snaring the usual festival circuit big-hitters. Instead there's a quixotic charm to the line-up: ZZ Top rubbing shoulders with Florence, anyone? Meanwhile, the presence of several thousand shrugging French teenagers is bound to lend a certain laid-back vibe to proceedings. Don't expect any heaving moshpits – this is a festival with class. Plus, this being the gastronomic heart of France, the food is a cut above the average UK festival fare, with Moroccan dishes a speciality: no botulism burgers or Latex-flavoured noodles here. Accommodation-wise, camping is your best option, especially if you can bagsy a spot by the lake, but there's also a youth hostel nearby, or – if your pockets are deep – a few cottages and four-star hotels a short drive away. Better still, the festival have launched a special UK package featuring ticket, accommodation and transportation. C'est formidable...

GUY EPPEL

LINE-UP

Peter Doherty • Florence + The Machine
Paul Weller • White Lies • ZZ Top • Mika
Phoenix • Gogol Bordello • Seasick Steve
Devendra Banhart • The Maccabees
Rodrigo Y Gabriela • Newton Faulkner



WHERE

Aix-les-Bains, Rhone-Alpes region, southeast France

DIRECTIONS

Head for Lyon, by plane or TGV. From there's it's an hour's drive away. Or take the easy option and book their special UK package deal (see main copy for more details)

WEATHER

It's the south of France – it'll be gorgeous

FOOD & DRINK

You'll find an assortment of food stalls serving Chinese, Breton and Moroccan food, plus lots of bars – but there's no ATM, so bring cash

ACCOMMODATION

Get there early to bag a spot in the lakeside campsite (the other one's next to a McDonald's)

WEBSITE

www.musilac.com/english

COST

€121 (£105) for the three days, but save €30 (£26) by booking in April

WIN!

We have one pair of tickets with camping to give away. To enter*, head to *NME.COM/win* and answer this:
What natural feature does Musilac boast?
a) lake b) volcano c) cave

* FIRST CORRECT ENTRY CHOSEN AT MIDNIGHT ON MONDAY, MAY 3 WILL WIN USUAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY, AVAILABLE AT *NME.COM/terms*

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OPTIMUS ALIVE!

JULY 8-10



As trusting punters we've all been victims of festivals promising an urban utopia. In reality they're usually held in barren wastelands vaguely resembling a cess pit with a stage on top. Rarely do we get to enjoy an array of bands in an idyllic setting that's picture perfect. But it needen't always be that way.

Welcome then, to Optimus Alive! 10. Taking place by the awe-inspiring Tagus River, this festival prides itself on being one of the cheapest and all-encompassing in the whole of Europe; why else would a staggering 120,000 people each year gather to hear bands that will delight rockers and rave-heads alike?

Now celebrating its fourth year, Optimus Alive! has already gained itself a favourable reputation among Portugal's natives as well as those from further afield, for not just its musical reputation, but for the way it encompasses the arts and science as areas of interest for attendees, too.

Alive! also prides itself on its Super Bock Stage catering for brand new projects and emerging artists, with bands such as The Ting Tings, Vampire Weekend and MGMT all having played.

But don't just let the music draw you there. With its staggeringly hot summers, stunning beaches that are ideal for those wanting to surf and relax near the festival site and its vibrant nightlife, Lisbon really has so much more to offer to the more the discerning festival goer.

LINE-UP

Pearl Jam • Gossip • Kasabian • Faith No More • Alice In Chains • Gomez • Manic Street Preachers • The Drums • Calvin Harris • The xx • La Roux • Skunk Anansie • Biffy Clyro • Steve Aoki • LCD Soundsystem • Gogol Bordello • Simian Mobile Disco • Boys Noize • Burns

optimus ALIVE! 10 Oeiras

WHERE

Passeio Maritimo de Alges, Lisbon, Portugal

DIRECTIONS

Flights to Lisbon can be found at easyJet

WEATHER

Temperatures often exceed 30ºC in July. Be sure to stay in the shade and use plenty of sun-screen

FOOD & DRINK

Portuguese cuisine, fast food and vegetarian options are all available. Beers cost around £2.50

ACCOMMODATION

Your weekend ticket will get you into the festival campsite. For day-ticket holders there are hotels for all budgets nearby

WEBSITE

www.optimusalive.com

COST

£95 (€105) approx for a weekend ticket with camping, £81 (€90) without; £45 (€50) approx for day tickets

WIN!

To win a pair of weekend tickets to this year's Optimus Alive!, head to *NME.COM/win* and answer this question*:

Which of the following bands played at last year's Optimus Alive!?

a) Metallica
b) Metal Handles
c) Metal Braces

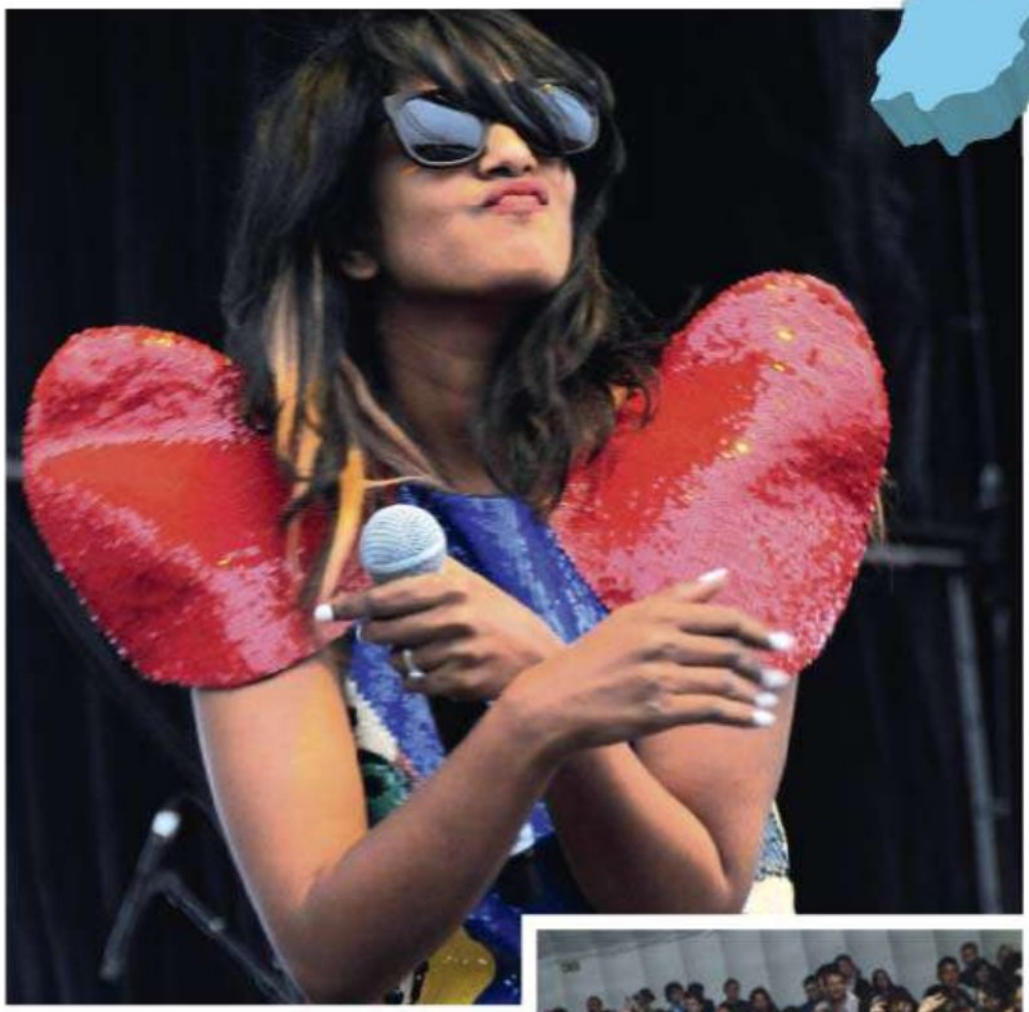
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GETTY

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ØYA

AUGUST 10-14





All festivals are created equal, but some festivals are more equal than others. While you might find a weekender with a pretty site, there won't be much going on in the evenings. Or perhaps you've discovered a vibrant festie in a real concrete shithole. Øya combines both – it's set in beautiful medieval ruins surrounded by a crystal clear fjord and offers an abundance of picturesque spots in which to hang out. But it's also five minutes stumble from the beating heart of Oslo, which is just as well, as the city rages by night with myriad bars and clubs open for more late-night gig options. The city's rooftop club Stratos is full of afterparties, while new venue Tilt is packed with Shuffleboard tables and pinball machines to offer more thrills.

The relatively compact festival is cramming in even more bands than ever for their 11th edition, set across several medium-sized and manageable stages, so you'll never be too far from the action. No more squinting at distant figures onstage from half a mile away. If you fancy catching one of the most interesting weekend line-ups at one of the greenest, safest, most ecological shindigs going, we suggest you get in there quick – this place won't stay secret forever.

GETTY, ANDREW KENDALL

LINE-UP

MIA • Paul Weller • Iggy & The Stooges • Pavement • LCD Soundsystem • La Roux • The xx • Casiokids • Air • Robyn

ØYA AUGUST 10m-14m 2010 OSLO

WHERE
The Medieval Park, downtown Oslo, Norway

DIRECTIONS
Ryanair flies to Oslo, then a quick shuttle will get you to the city and the site's not far away

WEATHER
Statistically, it's Norway's hottest week, so pack the sun cream

FOOD & DRINK
All the gastro delights from greasy burgers to Norwegian specialities. Beer costs a fiver

ACCOMMODATION
Nearby Ekeberg Camping (Ekebergveien 65, ph. +4722198568) allows tents with a discount on groups of 10 or more

WEBSITE
http://oyafestivalen.com

COST
£206 (€235) for a pass

WIN!

We have 2 pairs of festival passes, including hotel accommodation in Oslo to give away*. Head to *NME.COM/win* and answer this question: Which famous writer and Oslo resident wrote *A Dolls House*?

a) Henrik Olson
b) Henrik Ibsen
c) Mary-Kate Olson

* THIS COMPETITION IS OPEN TO OVER-18S ONLY * FIRST 2 CORRECT ENTRIES CHOSEN AT MIDNIGHT ON MONDAY, MAY 3 WILL WIN USUAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY, AVAILABLE AT *NME.COM/terms*

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PUKKELPOP

AUGUST 19-21



Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, Belgium's Pukkelpop has become one of Europe's staple festivals. Since starting as a one-day, seven-act bash in 1985, it's come on leaps and bounds. Last year saw 180,000 people turn up to see Arctic Monkeys, Faith No More, Beirut, NERD and Kraftwerk strut their stuff on the Main Stage. This year things promise to be just as big. Once again taking place at the Hasselt-Kiewit site from August 19-21 (that's Thursday to Saturday), expect around 200 acts – Iron Maiden, Queens Of The Stone Age and The Prodigy are already confirmed – to play across eight stages. With plenty of loos, showers and cashpoints on site, not to mention an array of strong Belgium beers, you shouldn't have much trouble looking after number one.

Travel is easy too, as ticketholders automatically get given a free train ride from Brussels (which is on the main Eurostar route) to Hasselt. Once there, a bus (also free) takes you straight to the festival gates, though it's also walkable – useful if you want to stock up on local beer, which many residents sell from their driveways on the way. Aside from the music, Pukkelpop also boasts an impressive range of onsite fringe events taking in theatre, cinema, chill-out areas, DJ tents and a massive range of foods in the appropriately named Resto section.

TOM OXLEY

LINE-UP

Iron Maiden • Queens Of The Stone Age • The Prodigy • Blink-182 • White Lies • Hot Chip • Mumford & Sons • Goldfrapp The xx • Foals • The Cribs • The National These New Puritans • Jónsi • 3Oh!3 Limp Bizkit • Placebo • Blood Red Shoes Eels • Caribou • Darwin Deez • Kate Nash Serj Tankian • Fuck Buttons • Yeasayer Diplo • Switch • Magnetic Man • NOFX



WHERE

The site is situated along Kempische Steenweg, in Kiewit Hasselt, Belgium

DIRECTIONS

Take the Eurostar to Brussels, then a free train to Hasselt, followed by a free short bus ride, to the site

WEATHER

It has been hot and dry in recent years

FOOD & DRINK

Belgium beers a-plenty, and there's also numerous food stalls offering a wide range of quality fodder from around the world

ACCOMMODATION

Weekend tickets include on-site camping

WEBSITE

http://www.pukkelpop.be

COST

Combi weekend tickets are £128 (€145), while day tickets cost £66 (€76)

WIN!

To win one pair of weekend camping tickets to Pukkelpop*, head to *NME.COM/win* and answer this question: What big birthday is Pukkelpop celebrating this year? a) 10 b) 5 c) 25

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SELECTOR

JUNE 4-5



ANDREW WHITTON

Poland may once have been under the rule of martial law back in the 1980s but you certainly won't find any dictatorial tastes at the Selector Festival.

This intimate two-day festival prides itself on its die-hard devotion to contemporary electronic music. But instead of being the stale old line-ups you've been used to seeing on the festival circuit, Selector Festival effortlessly manages to find room to provide a platform for dance music to experiment and liberate outside of its sometimes restrictive borders. And this is precisely what makes it stand out from your average bleep-orientated weekend rave-off.

Now zooming head first and fast into its second year, Selector Festival is held in the Polish centre for academic, cultural and artistic pursuits. So when your party head is throbbing some kind of dreadful in the morning after the heavy night before, you can take a relaxing wander into the town centre steeped in historical and architectural delights. Coupled with the warm months of a Polish summer there really is no better tonic.

And as Selector Festival is the apparition of Alter Art who, lest we forget, are also organizing the Heineken Open'er Festival (see page 4), you know that you're in more than safe hands to ensure that you have one hell of a weekend dancing your socks off to the most vibrant and enthralling sounds in the international dance music arena.

LINE-UP

Faithless • Boys Noize • Thievery Corporation • Friendly Fires • Metronomy • Uffie • Friendly Fires • Delphic • Bloody Beetroots Death Crew 77 • Booka Shade • Calvin Harris

SELECTOR FESTIVAL
4-5 | 06 | 2010 CRACOW
BEST CONTEMPORARY MUSIC AND MULTIMEDIA

WHERE

Krakow, Krakow's Blonia (Tents), Poland

DIRECTIONS

Both easyJet and Ryanair fly to Krakow

WEATHER

Highs of 20°C, so travel prepared

FOOD & DRINK

A variety of hot and cold foods ranging from traditional Polish cuisine to fast foods and salads. Pints are £1.50.

ACCOMMODATION

There's no camping, but there is a range of hotels and hostels nearby

WEBSITE

www.selectorfestival.pl

COST

£44 (PLN 200) approx for a two-day ticket; £30 (PLN 135) approx for a day ticket

WIN!

Want to win a pair of tickets to Selector? Go to *NME.COM/win* and answer this question*: Including this year, how long has Selector Festival been going? a) 12 years b) Two years c) Five years

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SONAR

JUNE 17-19



Barcelona's Sónar festival – or, to give it its long title, the International Festival Of Advanced Music and Multimedia Art – basically represents the exact antithesis of everything that everyone moans about regarding the UK festival circuit. Desolate expanses of generic field? How about a festival in the midst of gorgeous Catalonian ruins and a finale in the most epic and *Bladerunner*-esque of aircraft hangers. Uniformly apocalyptic weather that turns whatever site you're at into Vietnam? How about the most blissful combination of mid-summer sun and breeze that any human being has ever experienced as you toddle out of the rave and into the midday light. A compilation of all the same mind-numbing 'on-tour' bills that clog up every Godforsaken chain auditorium all-year-round? Or, a brain-melting line-up painstakingly put together by a team who study the entire globe all-year-round for *the* most pioneering developments in dance music as and when they happen.

GUY EPPEL, JAMES QUINTON

Sónar is a symposium of sound. Being surrounded by such a deluge of insane new styles actually feels like you're experiencing a musical evolution right before your ears. That's not to over-intellectualise it. If you're into getting out of your head and dancing like a crucified jellyfish for 72 hours straight, there's simply no more idyllic environment to do just that. If you're hankering for a truly multi-dimensional festival experience where you leave with equal amounts of your mind destroyed and your soul-edified, then a trip to the Spanish city this summer might just have been in order.

LINE-UP

LCD Soundsystem • Dizzee Rascal • Roxy Music • Joy Orbison • Chemical Brothers

WHERE

Center of Contemporary Culture (CCCB), Museum of Contemporary Art (MACBA), and the Gran Vía (M2). Av. Botànica, 62. Barcelona

DIRECTIONS

Jump on a cheap Easyjet flight to Barcelona, then take a train or bus to the festival site

WEATHER

Sunny as you like! So get those short-shorts and shades at the ready

FOOD & DRINK

Anything you like! You're in the middle of one of Europe's finest cities

ACCOMMODATION

There's a bevvie of cheap hotels in and around the local area. Some airlines offer all-in packages

WEBSITE

www.sonar.es

COST

€155 (£135) for a weekend pass, €35 (£30) for a day pass

WIN!

Answer this question correctly at *NME.COM/win and you could win a pair of three-day festival passes:**

What is the capital of Spain?

a) Madrid b) Barcelona c) Malaga

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ROCK WERCHTER

JULY 1-4





Belgian festival Rock Werchter is a European festival institution, and on the continent is often talked about in the same breath as Roskilde and Glastonbury (it has its own 'Pyramid Stage'). It's one of the very biggest summer bashes to take place across the continent, with over 100,000 people heading there every year. As well as being famed for its atmosphere, the festival is one of the biggest draws in the world for bands, with organisers having little trouble beckoning the big names (Green Day, Muse) again this year. A four-day event, since its inception in 1975, particularly in recent years, the festival has enjoyed an influx of British fans looking for the biggest names, but equally interested in buzzing atmosphere and stepping away from the usual airfield-style events. UK bands have made it somewhat of a home from home, too. Last year, Oasis, Lily Allen and The Prodigy all played, while in 2008, Babyshambles cancelled their scheduled appearance there (of course).

DANNY NORTH

Rather than being tagged onto the edge of a city, the festival takes place next to the tiny Belgian village of Werchter, offering a tranquil alternative to the buzz-bustle of the main site.

LINE-UP

Faithless • Muse • Green Day • Pearl Jam • Stereophonics • Phoenix • Editors • Rammstein • Arcade Fire • Them Crooked Vultures • Wolfmother • Empire Of The Sun • Florence + The Machine • The Gaslight Anthem • La Roux • Paramore • The Ting Tings • Gossip



WHERE

Werchter, nr Brussels, Belgium

DIRECTIONS

From Brussels you can use your festival ticket to get the train for free to Leuven Station, from which buses run to the site

WEATHER

Just like the UK, really!

FOOD & DRINK

Pizza and sandwiches are available, plus wok dishes and chips. Drinks and fancier food such as oysters are available in the Chill Out area

ACCOMMODATION

Festival-goers need to buy a camping pass each (not per tent) either in advance or as they arrive

WEBSITE

www.Rockwerchter.be

COST

£167 (€188) for a four-day ticket without camping

WIN!

We have five pairs of festival tickets to give away*. Just answer this question correctly at *NME.COM/win*: Last year Oasis played at Werchter – but in which country did they famously split up last year? a) Portugal b) England c) France

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